C H A P T E R - I

COMPOSITION OF KASHMIR MUSLIM POPULATION

COMPOSITION OF KASHMIRI - MUSLIM POPULATION

On the top of the Indian subcontinent between 32 17° to 36,58° North latitude and 73.26° to 80 30° East longitude, the territory is known as the Jammu and Kashmir State.[1] The state is bound on the north by the pamirs, (the roof of the world) and China Turkistan from which it is completely segregated by the eastern off-shoots of the Hindu Kash and Kara-Karam mountains. The eastern and the western boundaries of the state boundaries of the state are made up by the Chinese Tibet and Pakistan while on the south it is bounded by the plains of the Indian subcontinent. As it is the meeting point of certain powers of the world, that is, the Soviet Russia, China, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, the state occupies a unique position in the political geography of India.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir as it exists today was founded by Maharaja Gulab Singh, the founder of Dogra rule in the state. After the British annexed the Punjab to its territory, Raja Gulab Singh, who had his greedy

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1. Rai Badur, Pt. Anant Ram, Census of India, 1931, Vol.XXIV, Jammu and Kashmir State, Part I, Report, (Jammu, the Rambir Govt. Press, P.1.).

eyes fixed on the valley of Kashmir, long before the treaty of Amritsar, got the valley of Kashmir from the East India company through a sale deed known in the history of Jammu and Kashmir State as the treaty of Amritsar for a petty sum of seventyfive lakh rupees. Remarking on the deed, Iqbal says:

> Each hill, each garden, each field,
> Each farmer too they sold,
> A Nation for a price so cheap.

According to Article I of the treaty of Amritsar the British Government transferred and made over for ever in independent position to Maharaja Gulab Singh "all the hilly or mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the east ward to the River indus and west ward to the River Ravi including Chenab and excluding Lahul being part of the territories ceded to the British Government of Lahore state according to the provision of Article IV of the treaty of Lahore dated of March,1846".[2] According to this Article the Kashmir valley was, thus, transferred to Gulab Singh who assumed the title of the Maharaja of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

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2. Lt.Col.Bhagwan Singh, Political Conspiracies of Kashmir, (Light & Life Publishers, Rohtak, 1973), Appendix III Treaty of Amritsar,P.135.

The treaty of Amritsar was no better than a charater of serfdom for the helpless and unfortunate people of Kashmir. The treaty was, infact, a sale-deed. It was a slur on the fair face of a Nation - The British- which is known for its civilization and contribution to the human race and taught its subjugated colonies the philosophy of liberalism, human values and a fair sense of justice. But when the same nation sold Kashmir alongwith its two million people to a "Bigot" it was estimated that the inhabitants were "at twentyfive shillings a head" the most extensive transaction in the slave trade of modern times".[3]

Commenting on the treaty of Amritsar Mrs.Ansley records:-

"History shows us in the case of our queen Mary and also in that of philip of spain with regard to the Netherlands, that no rule is so cruel as that of bigot over people of a faith differing from his own".[4]

An eminent historian of Kashmir and freedom fighter says:-

"It was altogether a sordid,shameful affair devoid of all sense, fairness,justice and equality, two million

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3. Allice Marchioness Reading letters addressed to members of her family in England including from Kashmir (India Office Library, MSSEURE, 316).

4. Mrs. J.C.Murray Ansley, Our visit to Hindustan, Kashmir and Ladakh (London, 1879),P.272.

of people in the valley and Gilgit were sold like sheep and cattle to an alien adventurer and the whole transaction was made behind his back.[5]

The Dogras ruled the state from 1846 to 1947. During this long period of one hundred years, the state saw four ruling princes. The last ruler was Maharaja Hari Singh who ruled from 1925 to 1947.

The Muslim community of Kashmir is one of the oldest extant Muslim communities in the Indian sub-continent. Long before the "Muslim rule" was established in Kashmir in 1320, Muslims had entered the valley as traders and soldiers of fortune. Pandit Kalhana's reference to the Turukshahs (Turks),[6] and Marco-Polo's evidence regarding the employment of the "Saracens"[7] as butchers by the Hindus, speak of the Muslim settlements in Kashmir. But it must be emphasised that the Muslim rule established in Kashmir not as a result of foreign invasion but of the internal chaos that finally led to the decline of the Hindu rule.

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5. P.N.Bazaz, The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir, (New Delhi, Kashmir Publishing Company, 1954), P.183.

6. Kalhana's Raj-Taragini (Stein's tr.) Delhi,1961.

7. H.Yule, The Book of Ser Marcopolo, ed;Tr. by H.Yule, PP. 176-7, London, 1903.

It is pertinent to note that on the eve of the beginning of Sultanate era, the Kashmir society had two main religious groups viz., the Buddhists and the Hindus. At that time, Buddhism was at the verge of decline right from 631-33,[8] The time, the Chinese traveller Huein Tsiang visited the valley. It is reported that it were the Buddhists, who first embraced Islam at the hands of Sayyed Sharajuddin, a great Muslim saint.[9] Very little is known about his missionary activities. However, he is the person, who is said to have converted Rinchana[10] to Islam. Rinchana came to Kashmir alongwith his followers due to the unfavourable circumstances in Ladakh following his father's death. It were the political instability and economic backwardness of the valley caused by Zulju's invasion of Kashmir in 1320, and the ravages caused by the Mongol invaders for about eight months, that afforded

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8. See Stein, t, Introduction, I, P.87.

9. He was prominent among the early Muslim immigrants from Central Asia to Kashmir. He was a Sufi of the Suharwardi order. He was a disciple of Shah Ni-Matullah Parsi. He is reported to have come to Kashmir in the reign the king Suhadeva from Turkistan, Baharistani Shahi, F.146, Aba Rafi uddin Baba Daud Mishtaki, Asrar al-Abrar, F.45 .

10. Rinchana was the son of a Ladakhi chief, Lhachen - denyos-grub (Lhachend Ngos-grub), who ruled Ladakh from 1290-1320. Francke, Antiquities of Indian Tibet, II, P.98.

Rinchana an opportunity to occupy the throne of Kashmir.[11] His conversion to Islam is regarded as a land mark in the history of Kashmir. Like other Buddhists of medieval period Rinchana was fond of taking part in religious discussions.[12] He used to spend sleepless nights in the quest for truth,[13] and hold religious discussion with Devaswami a Brahman priest, who lived in the city of Srinagar.Rinchana was diguested with the spiritual pretentions and castism and thus rejected Salvism.[14] In the meanwhile, he met Saraj-uddin[15] who explained the Rinchana the truth and simplicity of tlye faith of Islam. It is reported that Rinchana was

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11. Mohibbul Hassan, Kashmir under the Sultans, PP.34-39.

12. As lateas Husain Shah's reign (1563-70) we hear of the discussions between the Sultan and the Buddhist priests living in his kingdom. Haidar Malik, Tarikh-i-Kashmir,F.159b.

13. Baharistan-i-Shahi, F.14 a; Hasan bin Ali; Tarikh-i-Kashmir, F. 98a, Haider Malik, Tarikh-i-Kashmir, ff.10 Lb-202 a.

14. Rinchana did not accept 'Saivism' in view of the abuses which had crept into it because of corrupt practices of Brahmans. The Hindus and the Buddhist priests did not satisfy his spiritual quest, he finally decided to accept the faith of the first person, whom he would see the next morning.And on seeing Sayyed Saraj-uddin offering prayers near his place the next morning, the king after entering into a dialogue with the Sufi,become a Muslim.

15. Baharistan-i-Shahi, F.146; Baba Nasib, Majmu'a dar Ansab Mashaikhi Kashmir, F.106.

impressed by the personality of this Sufi saint, who embodied both human and divine love and thus he accepted Islam under the influence of this sufi saint,(Sayyed Saraj-uddin).[16] There is little doubt that Rinchana accepted Islam at the hands of Saraj-uddin. Not only are the persian sources unanimous in regard to his association with the Sufi,[17] but the subsequent facts of his conversion also testify to his spiritual affiliation with him. The very name Sadruddin (the leader of religion) given by the Sufi to the convert explains that the saint wanted to make him conscious about his duties as the first ruler of Kashmir. It may be stated here, that in Medieval times it was personal decision of the chiefs that usually determined the collective action of the groups, hence a considerable number of Buddhist followers of Rinchana who accompanied from Ladakh to Kashmir also embraced Islam after their chief assumed political power and his subsequent conversion to Islam.[18] Rinchana was able to rule for a brief period of three years from 1320-1323 A.D.[19] with the support of there new converts.

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16. The patant fact about the Rinchana's conversion bears an elaborate testomony to the historic rule of the first Suharwardi Sufi,during the formative phase of Islam in Kashmir.

17. Haider Malik, Tarikh-i-Kashmir,FF.120-193).

18. Rawan Chandra, his brother-in-law, for instance, accepted Islam immediately after the Rinchana's conversion.

19. Kashmiri's still continue to follow certain ancient traditions of the Buddhist religion bears testimony

On the other hand, the Hindus were divided into a number of socially interdependent groups. This helped the Islamic missionaries particularly during 14th and 15th centuries to attract a good majority of different ethenic and cultural types towards Islam, which advocates a simple religious teaching, social pattern and attitude to human life. These simple principles of Islam appealed to the persons of different ethenic origins and cultural backgrounds.[20] Thus Islam was embraced by agriculturists, artisans, boatmen, gardeners and other groups performing menial jobs, but also by such a powerful politically dominant group in ancient society such as Damaras Lavanyas and Tantrins, whose names still survive in the modern families among Kashmiri Muslims such as Dars, Loans and Tantray.[21] It is note-worthy that among the Kashmiri Muslims different types of family names are commonly used. One of the most widely prevalent of such names is "Bat" which without any doubt, is same as " Bhatta" and obviously bears and elaborate testimony to the fact of conversion. There are some more examples of this kind of surname such as Pandit, Koul (Sanskrit Kaula,originally

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to the fact, that a good number of them are descendents of Buddhist converts.

20. M.I.Khan, Perspectives on Kashmir, P.127.

21. Ibid.

the name of a Brahman sect) Naik and Ryosh (Sanskrit Rishi, saintly learned men). The Shaiks[22] who constitute an overwhelming majority of Kashmiri Muslims are generally considered to be from converts.[23]

/ It is important to note that Kashmir was an independent kingdom between 1320-1586 A.D. During this period there was a steady stream of Muslim migration from Central Asia and Persia. Besides, the Sayyids who flocked to the valley in large numbers, there were Persian speaking immigrants, whose descendents formed an important element of Islamic society in Kashmir in the Mughal period in Kashmir (1586-1757). The dominant groups such as chaks,Magras, Rainas, Dars and Bats were dispossessed as military and administrative groups. A hierarchy of Mughal officers now began to man high posts in administration. The descendents of the Mughals may now be found among Mirzas, Begs, Mirs, Buchhas,etc. Similarly, during the Afghan rule in Kashmir 1757-1819, there

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22. Shaikh, an Arabic word, literarlly, means an old man or man of authority,"the term seems to be widely used in south Asia to designate,Muslims descended from Hindu converts:T.N.Madan, The Muslim Communities of South Asia, Delhi, P.109.

23. Walter Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir, London, 1895, P.306. There is however, all likelihood of some of the Shaikhs particularly in urban centres of Kashmir, to have descended from immigrants.

settled in the valley certain men of Afghan tribes. In the second half of the 19th century certain Muslim families from different parts of Northern India poured in Kashmir and settled here permanently.[24] By the end of 16th century a large number of people had already accepted Islam. However, a seizable number of Brahmans was not converted to Islam. This group whose members are now-a-days popularly known as pandits has throughout the medieval period and modern periods of Kashmir history struggled to maintain its distinct identity.

From above it is obvious that the Kashmiri Muslims were not a homogeneous group but a conglomerate community, which has grown slowly as a result of inter-marriages and conversions. This has of course led to the formation of various exclusive sub-groups within the community defined in terms of geographical, racial and even caste origin.[25] But in reality the Muslim society of Kashmir has not totally lost the homogeneity, nor has it become differentiated. The total amalgamation of the foreign settlements that has taken place during the last hundred

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24. Op.cit., M.I. Khan, P.129.

25. Ibid, P.129.

years or so has given an enduring unity both culturally and linguistically to Kashmiri Muslims.

It may be stated here, that the spread of Islam in the valley of Kashmir is considerably different from cultural and historical point of view. There are ample proofs which depict that the Sufis from Central Asia and Persia[26] also played a role to the conversion of Islam in valley. But the fact remains that the "mass conversion" of Kashmir can't be attributed to their miraculous work. Though their activities led to certain individual and group conversions, but this process of conversion took a long time to nurture. In this regard the role played by Shaikh Noor-ud-Din in converting the Kashmir into the Islamic fold is appriciable. He is said to have attempted the reconciliation of Hindu-Muslim practices and actually paved the way for the gradual assimilation of commoners to the Islamic identity.[27] He condemned the caste system of the Hindus which tempted the low caste Hindus to accept Islam so as to be free from the clutches of Brahmans. It is said that their social position or family status did not improve much after their entry into the Islamic fold. But they could atleast

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26. The role attributed to Bulbul Shah, Sayyid Saraj-udin, Sayyid Ali Hamadani, Sayyid Mohammad Hamadani and a band of his followers is very well known to the students of Kashmir history.

27. M.I.Khan, Kashmir's Transition to Islam.

get the satisfaction of calling themselves members of Islamic community,[28] and thus could get a sight of relief from the bondage of Brahmans. Shaikh Noor-ud-Din is credited with the fact that the prominent Hindu ascetics alongwith their followers came under the fold of Islam. It seems probable that caste system among the Hindu must have prompted the low castes and the weaker sections of Kashmiri society to break off their religious ties with a caste - ridden social structure. The lower caste Hindus were attracted to Islam as a result of dialogue between the Hindu ascetics and Shaikh Noor-u-Din.[29] In this connection the mention may be made that Bhum Sadhu, Tuli Raina, Ladi Raina and Hindu ascetics who entered the fold of Islam alongwith their followers. Reportedly twelve hundred Hindus under the leadership of Tuli Raina accepted Islam due to the efforts of Shaikh Noor-u-Din.[30]

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28. Islam preaches equality of men and has no caste distinctions. This sentiment is specially reflected in the Rishinama of Char in which a conscious attempt was made to present Islam as an equalitarian religion vis-a-vis the religious ethnocentrism of the Brahimanic faith.

29. In a dialogue attributed to Noor-ud-Din and Bhum Sadhu, the Muslim saint emerged as an embodiment of human virtue, piety and compassion.

30. M. I. Khan, Op.Cit. p.182.

From the above it becomes clear that Shaikh played a commendable role in the propagation of Islam and enjoyed a distinguished position in the traditional Kashmiri society. He made Islam comprehenisible to the Kashmiris through precept and example, which can not be over emphaised. His criticism of caste - system and Brahmanic rituals and customs contributed a great deal to the loosening of religious and social ties with their society. He was able to promote a fresh understanding of Islamic teachings in a different millieu. It would not be wrong to assume that traditional Kashmiri society was transformed from a traditionally defined, caste-ridden society to the community of prophet Mohammad (SAW). It may be stated here that after under-going a process of Islamic acculturation, the converts saw their identity in terms of new religious community,[31] of which they had become mambers consciously or unconsciously. The most significant social change that took place was the gradual development of Islam as the focus of social identity among the common folk. For the understanding of Islamic teachings the use of Kashmiri language as a religious vehicle was fostered and Islam was opened up to the common people who were not educated in classical Arabic and Persian languages and Islam was brought to the common people in a meaningful way.[32]

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31. Ibid., P.194.

32. Ibid., P.196.

It may be mentioned here that the Muslims of Kashmir who constituted 93% of the total population during 19th century, remained backward due to the oppression under the Afghans, Sikhs and Dogras. The avaycious Sikh rulers (1819-1946) succeeded the Afghans in Kashmir. The Sikhs are said to have closed the Jamia Masjid of Srinagar to public prayers and in addition several mosques including the Pather Masjid were declared to be the property of state.[33] The heavy taxation policy was introduced and almost all sections of Muslim population including butchers, bakers, boatman , scavengers and even prostitutes were heavily taxed.[34] Cow slaughter was declared as an offence punishable by death.[25] The Sikh governors posted in Kashmir unleashed a reign of terror.[36] The practice of forced labour (Begar) was

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33. Pir Hasan Shah, Tarikh-i-Kashmir (Persian Text) II. Printed by the Directorate of Research and Publications. Government of Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar 1976, PP.58-71.

34. Major Leeche's report (NAI).

35. Ibid, P.758, Pir Hasan Shah.

36. M.I.Khan, "Some aspects of Corvee in Kashmir", Research Bi-annual, Vol.I, No.II, Published by the Directorate of Research,Srinagar, 1976, PP. 58-71. If one Muslim was killed by a Sikh, the compensation allowed to his family was two rupees and four rupees if a Hindu. Thus a Sikh Soldier was given a free hand to kill the local Muslims.

continued, even an ordinary soldier could command the Muslims to do any work for him. Thus the Kashmiri Muslims were forced to do unpaid labour for their Sikh masters.[37] The system of Ijaradars to extort money from the peasants was a common practice. All these exactions resulted in the impoverishment of the Muslims, and the revenue remitted to Lahore increased from sixty-two lakhs of rupees at the beginning of the sikh rule and to ten lakhs at the end.[38] Begging became common, natural calamities further added to the miseries of the already famished people. Many villages became depopulated as a result of migration.[39] Another important consequence of the Sikh rule was that the Ulema, fuzala and other respectable families of the Muslims were deprived of land-grants (Jagir) and of the hereditary allowance they had held from the time of Mughal rulers.[40] The defeat of Sikhs in the first Anglo-Sikh war in 1846 at the hands of the British marked the end of the Sikh rule in Kashmir. As

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37. Ibid.

38. James P.Frrguson: Kashmir : A History introduction. London, 1961, PP.49-51.

39. M.I.Khan. Op.Cit.

40. Hasan, Op.Cit. PP.758-59.

already stated that by the treaty of Amritsar, concluded on March 16th, 1846, Kashmir was sold by the British imperialists to Raja Gulab Singh, the Dogra ruler of Jammu, for a sum of 75 lakhs of rupees. It was a deep-seated change that Muslim society of the valley underwent after this sale of Kashmir. The contours of change, however, were clear. A pattern of new economic relations emerged when the new rulers declared themselves to be the absolute owners or lords of the land.[41] Although the recognition of Dogra rulers ownership in land formed the basis of new government policy throughout the period extending from 1846 to 1887 or so, the Dogra administration worked directly to create a class of landed gentry, comprising mainly the Kashmiri Pandits and the Dogra Rajputs. Most of the Pandit officials of the new regime were from urban background and there was a tendency among them to become owners of the land.[42] It was immediately, after the death of Maharaja Gulab Singh that the land got transferred from cultivators to the official class of the Dogra rule.[43] This official class

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41. M.I.Khan, Op.cit; Historical Dimension, P.68.

42. Lawrence to Nisbet, letter No.13, 1891/NAI.

43. M.I.Khan, Op.cit., P.70.

of the Dogra administration squeezed and plundered the Muslim peasants. While writing about the officials, Tyndale Bisco, says that "the officials had bullied and squeezed the Mohammadan peasants for years past, and their large houses in the city with all their wealth, were standing witness to their looting powers, for the salary they received from the state was quite insignificant."[44]

It will be in place to mention here that, the above mentioned state of affairs could not continue. Its break -down got started, when the valley was linked with outside influences, which was made possible with the opening of Jhelum valley cart road. The means of communication in Kashmir, prior to the establishment of British residency were primitive.[45] Lawrence in his famous book "The Valley of Kashmir" says that "there were roads along which ponies and bullocks can pass in fair weather, but roads as understood in other countries do not exist."[46] There were no wheel traffic roads; Even

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44. Tyndale Bisco, Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade, London, 1922, P.268.

45. The river Jhelum was the main artery of commerce in Kashmir. The bulk of international commerce was carried along this natural highway but there was one great limitation on river traffic that during winter Jhelum being low was less navigable.

46. As quoted by Tyndale Bisco in his Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade, PP.64-65; Beyond the Pir Panjal, P.240.

till 1900, there was no road with the name. This type of backward and poor state of communication and transport with India hindered the development of valley in almost every field of life.[47] It is noteworthy, that the British residency gave prominence to opening up main lines of communication with the rest of India. It was during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh that the great work started in 1880 and was completed in 1890. The rail head at Rawalpindi was connected with Srinagar through the Jhelum valley cart road.

Thus in late 1890's Kashmir was like a medieval country. The old institutions of valley flourished and the ancient crafts were still the basis of its economy. And its imports and exports from city to rural areas and from rural areas to the city were carried by coolies on their backs. However, Kashmir could not remain a medieval city for ever. It was two decades after 1890, that the valley saw break down of its isolation. Due to the impact of outside forces great social and cultural changes began to take place. It was opening of Jhelum valley road that helped to diminish the isolation of Kashmir from outside influences. Thus the customs and habits

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47. This state of affairs was the result of a complete lack of any constructive policy as regards the development of communication, on the part of Maharaja and his successors.

of generation began to change slowly and steadily.[48]

It is noteworthy, that the opening of Jhelum valley road was a key factor that helped Kashmir to develop and change and thus is regarded as a land-mark in the history of Kashmir. As a consequence, the isolation of Kashmiri Muslims from their brotheren in India began to decline. With the result their contact with outside Muslims, prominent members among them started Muslim Educational Movement in Kashmir in late 90's. Moulavi Rasool Shah is given credit for having started a school in Srinagar as a safeguard against Muslims being taken towards Christanity as Mr. Bisco had already started the school at Srinagar. Thus Muslims of Kashmir also began to receive education on western lines and became politically conscious. This helped their society in its transition from medieval to modern age, which is the key factor of Kashmir history.

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48. M.I.Khan, History of Srinagar, 1846-1947, A Study of Socio-Cultural Change, Srinagar, 1978, PP.36-38.

C H A P T E R - II

THE TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

THE TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

Kashmiri society was steeped in its past traditions till the beginning of the 20th century. It was until 1890 that the society retained the old customs in almost every aspect of life to a marked degree. Before the opening of the Jhelum Valley Cart Road, Kashmir was in complete isolation. The condition of the roads in the valley was deplorable. It would not be wrong to say that there was no road worth the name. It was because of this isolation that Kashmir developed parochialism and remained backward. A study of the previous customs reveals that the social set-up in Kashmir did not undergo a drastic change. Kashmir retained its old customs, rites, rituals and superstitions, in spite of the impact of western ideas ~~of modernise~~, except for a few sections of the population of the valley, during the Dogra rule. By and large, Kashmir continues to follow its age-old customs and traditions.

Joint family system was in existence, and was regarded as an index of good relations among the members of the family. Joint families were believed to be cultured families. It appears that the system was in existence due to the fact that economic condition of the family did not allow new couples to maintain a separate kitchen for them.[1] Traditional sentiments might also

1. M.I.Khan, History of Srinagar, p.84.

have played their role for the existence of the system in the valley.[2]

Position of Women

Women folk in medieval Kashmir may be divided into two major categories the upper class women and the lower class women. The former who lived in the seclution of their houses, belonged to the Wani, Qazi, Dhar, Mulla, Sheikh and Pirzada families.[3] There was hardly any contact possible of the lower class women, with the upper class women,[4] However, the ladies of the upper class did not exist in their own right. They were denied free movement and restrained from main training, free relationship with other ladies of their neighbourhood. Contrary to this, the women who belonged to the lower middle class as well as those of peasantry and labour classes, moved freely and helped their men folk in their fields.[5] Besides,

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2. M.L. Kapur, Thesis submitted for Ph.D., p.118.

3. Mohib-ul-Hassan, Kashmir under the Sultans, p.218.

4. Farooq Ahmad Batt,M.Phil Thesis, History and Culture of Medieval Kashmir, as reflected in Folk Lore of Kashmir, p.92.

5. In rural Kashmir, Women would also flock to near by or distant Jungles to collect fire-wood and wild vegetables. They would also go to Jungles to feed their cattle.

preparing food, their most laborious work was that of husking and grinding of food grain.[6] The paddy was put in a wooden mortar, in which it was pounded with a heavy wooden pestle. It was work which made for physical development in those accustomed to the exercise. The women of urban areas also helped their husbands in their work. For example, the potter's wife dug clay for her husband and painted the pots before they are baked.[7] In the medieval times, for both the rural and urban women folk, the spinning wheel was their only dependable friend.[8] It symbolized the endurance, hard work, cooperation and self-reliance of Kashmiri women folk. In times of economic distress and disability, they would act as good counsellors and come forward with wit and intelligence, to help her their life partner to come out of poverty. In case of domestic feuds, the defeated women would derive not only their livelihood, but mental peace and solace in the company of the spinning wheel.[9] The daughters-in-law were subjected to harsh treatment at their in-laws' house. Education was rare among the women folk.[10] Domestic feuds among the women, social

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6. Wakefield, G.E.C. Recollections-Fifty years in service of India, Lahore, 1934, P.115.
7. Ibid., PP.143-145.
8. Spinning Wheel Still plays its role in the poor section of Kashmiri society.
9. Lal Ded, Habba-Khatoon, are the suitable examples of this nature.
10. Kings of Kashmira, p.133, M.D.Farq, Khawateen-i Kashmir.

jealousies and mis-understandings had become a common phenomena.[11]

During the medieval and Dogra period, the institution of prostitution was in existence. During the latter period, there were two ill-famed centres of prostitution, one at Tashwan and the other at Maisuma. There were licensed prostitutes, from whom the state received 15 to 25 per cent, of their earnings which accounted for a part of the whole revenue of the state. There were 18, 715, state licensed prostitutes in Kashmir in 1880.[12] Though the Maharaja received a lot of revenue from them, ~~was~~ no money was spent for their benefit. Mr. Henrey, officer on special duty in Kashmir, in 1880, writes that no care was taken of the sick prostitutes and as a result, syphilitic disease was spreading throughout Kashmir.[13]

The position of upper and middle class women was not good. Marriage was the great event of their lives. Arranging a marriage of a daughter was the most pressing duty of a father. Bisco says,"Self-respecting women are obliged to wear dirty garments for if they were clean ones, they might be taken for women of

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11. Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir, P.256, Ernest Neve, Beyond the Pir Panjal, p.240.

12. NAI/Foreign,Sec, E,May, 1983, No.86.

13. Ibid.
This is evident from the Srinagar mission hospital report, which says that during 1877-1878 the total number of new cases treated was 12,977 of these 2,516 were entered as "veneral diseases".

loose life". Almost no upper class woman was ever seen in the streets as the purdah was common among the Muslim women.[14]

Child marriage was common among the Pandits and the Muslims. Widow remarriage was common among the Muslims and not Pandits. Some Pandit women, after their husbands' death, had to live at their in-laws' houses and had to bear a lot of cruelties.[15]

Dress and Ornaments

The dress of the common people in the valley, both male and female, commonly consists of a pheran (long loose Wrapper) and trousers.[16] The pheran consists of two garments of equal size.[17] The Muslim women use a pheran of a shorter size than that were by men.The pheran is mostly suitable for the users of the kangari, because they sit down and place the fire-pot between their legs "it forms an excellent tent".[18] The head-dress

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14. Op.cit.,Bisco, pp.131, 106,60, James Milne, The Road to Kashmir, p.126.

15. A.K.Bamzai, The Kashmiri Pandits, p.32.

16. Pheran,covers the body and the arms and falls below the calf of the leg. In winter, the people of Kashmir both Hindus and muslims put on pherans, so as to keep themselves warm.

17. The inner garment is called Pochh.

18. Op.cit., M.I.Khan, p.87.

of a Kashmir Muslim woman was the kasaba, whereas a Pandit women wore the taranga,[19] Veil was not worn by common women. It was in fact used strictly by the women folk of upper classes, particularly, the Sayyid families, tracing their descent to Central Asia, Persia and Arabia. Men generally wore the kalposh (turban) on their heads. Some affulent families also used the dastar in place of a simple kalposh, Likewise, women belonging to well off families were the takani, a specially made cap of Turkish style.[20] A change in the head-dress was visible when the dastars and kalposhs were replaced by caps and fur-caps during the Dogra period.[21]

The pulhor (straw sandal) and the khraw (wooden chappal) were used for shoes by common Kashmiris throughout the Valley until the first quarter of this century. The Kashmiri pandits did not use leather shoes because of religious grounds. That is why they wore wooden clogs instead of leather shoes. But the Muslims used leather shoes in addition to wooden clogs. Gradually the use of

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19. It was during the Dogra period that changes in the dress of Kashmiris began to take place. Kasabas and Tarangas were disappeared, with the advent of Dupotta, Shalwar, Churidar-Pyjama and frocks were also preferred.

20. Op.cit. Farooq Ahmad Bhat, pp.100-107.

21. M.I.Khan, Op.cit., p.88.

wooden clogs began to be discarded by the literate Pandits.[22] It is significant that during the medieval period, the purdah was in vogue, but its use began to decline after the National Movement in 1931. Women leaders like Begum Abdullah and Zainab were the first to discard the purdah.[23]

Ornaments

A woman without ornaments is like a field without water". Just as the field without water appears desolate, ornamental deficiency makes her devoid of much fasination.[24] In fact, gold and silver ornaments in their crude form have formed an indispensable ingredient of life among human beings since time immemorial. It was in the past times that man discovered precious and rare metals. For ages, silver and gold have been used for making of ornaments.[25] There are always and still continue to be some festive occasions and ceremonies such as marriages and the like, when women put on their ornaments. Females young as well as old have ever been fond of wearing different ornaments. These delicate articles, in due course of time, came to be

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22. Ibid., p.89.

23. The Khidmat, Feb. 11, 1948.

24. G.S.Ghurye, Indian Costume, p.19.

25. Census of of India, 1961, Rural Craft Survey, (Himachal Pradesh) (Gold and Silver ornaments, Editor Ram Singh Chandra Pal, pp.3-4.
The basic or main raw materials used for making ornaments were and continue to be gold, silver, stones, pearls and diamonds, Only rich people, however, could afford ornaments of gold and precious metals. In most of the cases, ornaments were make of silver and sometimes these were

known as ornaments. There is reference to gold and silver ornaments in the Vedas, the Ramayana, the epics dramas of ancient times.[26]

It was long ago, Kashmiri women used different types of ornaments, precious or semi-precious. During the ancient times, they used necklaces, wristlets, fillets, armlets, finger-rings, ear-rings and anklets, Thus we find reference in the Nilmatpurana about the use of these and various other types of ornaments among the Kashmiri women.[27] Kalhana mentions several types of ornaments among Kashmiri women, introduced by King Harsha. His ladies wore golden kitaka teafed thras pandants over their foreheads and golden stringe for the end of locks of hair.[28]

In medieval period, necklaces ear-rings, nose-rings, bangles, bracelets and finger-rings were commonly used by the Muslim as well as the Hindu ladies. The rich and well-to-do people used gold and precious metal ornaments, while the poor people used silver ornaments.[29]

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gilded. Even brass, copper, tin, and a fine kind of clay were also used for making of different types of ornaments. The ornaments of poor people were made of tin and silver.

26. Ibid.

27. M.L.Kapur, Kingdom of Kashmir, p.225., S.C.Ray, Early History and Culture of Kashmir, PP.253-254; The Nilmata-purana, (Eng.Tr.), Vol.I.

28. Sir Aurel Stein, Rajatarangini, Vol.II, PP.928-931.

29. Mohib-ul-Hasan, op.cit., p.241, G.M.D.Sufi, Kashir, Vol.II, PP.581, P.N.K.Bamzai, A History of Kashmir, Pol.Social and Cultural from the earliest Times to the present day., p.512.

In fact the ornaments of Kashmir were unique in their design. These ornamental designs were further enriched during the rule of the Sultans and Mughals. Fashion in ornaments underwent a change especially in the Mughal period. It is said that Empress Nur-Jahan introduced more delicate varieties of jewellery in the valley, and Kashmiris copied the ornaments of Mughal nobility. It is said that nose-rings came into being during this period. It was until recent times that some brides made use of nose-rings on their marriages.[30] Kashmiri women were very fond of wearing ornaments. They were seen wearing, Kanwaji, Jhumka, Bale, Door, Tops, Dolanmall, Halqaband, Tikka, Deji-hor, etc. Poor women were equally fond of ornaments. They used silver, brase and other base metal ornaments for their wear. Thus ornaments were worn by the rich as well as poor women. In fact, ornaments were popular with all Kashmiri women.[31]

Houses and Food

Houses generally made of mud, timber, bricks and stones. Due to abundance of timber, people made timber houses. The houses of rich families both Hindu and Muslims, were generally situated on the banks of the river Jhelum and the roofs of the houses were generally

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30. Ibid.,
31. P.N.K.Bamzai, Socio-Economic History of Kashmir, p.343.
F.N.Bazaz, Daughters of Vitasta, PP.7-8.

covered with sheets of birch-bark. The poor people thatched their huts with rich straw. But the thatched roofs were banned, because that caused dangerous fires, and these roofs were replaced by mud roofs.[32]

Rice was the staple food of Kashmiris during the medieval and Dogra period also. Various kinds of rice were produced as laar byel, bahri, kathwar, gulmag, mushqa, budj, etc. In gandi areas people used maize and wheat. Besides meat, fish, eggs, butter and vegetables were also included in Kashmiri diet. Wild vegetables like Kratch, Obj, Nunar, Hand, Wopul-Hak and Hader were also used and cultivated. Vegetables like turnips, palak, tomato, bringal, cabbage, raddish and many other varieties were also used. Among watery vegetables[33] like Nadru, the stem of root of lotus was also eaten. It is a straw grey in colour, cylindrical in shape and about ten inches long and an inch and a half in diameter. When boiled and flavoured, it was considered to be highly nutritious. Even beans of the lotus were eaten un-ripe. It was also dried up for use during the chilly months of winter.[34] Salt was also a principal article of food, as Kashmiri liked their food very salty. There were two kinds of salt, the better quality came from Punjab and was liked by people, and the

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32. Op.cit., Bisco, P.87.

33. Nadru, Singharas and lotus beans are some of watery vegetables of Kashmir.

34. Lawrence, op.cit., P.254.

salt of inferior quality was brought from Ladakh.[35] Fish was also eaten. The flesh of sheep and goats was eaten by Hindus and Muslims alike.[36] The Hindu did't touch poultry or eggs,[37] garlic and onion,[38] they would eat wild fowl and the eggs of lake birds.[39] Beef was not procurable and the killing of cow was regarded as a crime, which involved capital punishment. The water nut or Singhara formed the chief article of diet of Hanjis, who lived on the banks of the Dal, Nagin and Anchar lakes.[40]

Wazwan, the traditional meal of Kashmiris was served to guests and neighbours on occasions of marriage and on some other important occasions.[41]

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35. Ibid.

36. Mirza Saif-ud-Din, Akhbaraat, 1853, Vol.VI. p.229., Gensus of India, 1901, p.84.

37. Ibid., Gensus of India, Lawrence, op.cit., p.254.

38. Ibid.

39. Lawrence, op.cit. p.254.

40. Unfortunately, Dogras imposed heavy tax on the Singaras and these nuts were gathered and sold to Hanjis at exorbitant rates. Robert throp found the Hanjis in miserable condition.

41. Wazwan is a pecularity of Kashmir. It is said that different varieties in Wazwan have originated here, only after the coming of Mughals. Despite,the concern of social reformers for enormous expenditure spent on it. It is still considered to be one of the major componants of their rich cultural heritage.

Domestic Goods

The economic condition of people during the medieval and Dogra periods was not favourable enough to enable them to have items of pleasure and comfort. The household goods of the Kashmiris consisted of wooden boxes for keeping their clothes in, and the mat (Wagu),[42] which was made in the villages of the valley. Villagers slept on mats and straw.[43] A Kashmiri had, in the shape of household articles, a splinning wheel, and mortar and pestle for husking rice and a Grata (stone rotor) for grinding maize, corn and wheat, earthen pots like Leji for cooking food and vegetables. It was generally believed that vegetables could be cooked well only in earthen pots and not in copper ones. A large earthen pot called Nuth was used for storing grain.[44]

Samavar and Degchi (Cauldron) were used for preparation of rice and tea respectively. Salt tea was taken by every Kashmiri morning and evening. Some respectable families would take Kahwa, (local coffee) first in the morning, and on Eid, marriages and at the arrival of guests with local bakery known as Bakirkhani and Kandi Kulcha.[45]

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42. It was made of grass, which was obtained from paddy plant.

43. Lawrence, op.cit, p.250.

44. Francis Young Husband, Kashmir, p.224.

45. This practice is prevalent event at present times, with the only improvement, that it is served with modified babery, which we could get at present times, Such as pine-apple-walnut pastry etc.

The Kangari is very important in the life of Kashmir. It continues to be used during winter. It is a portable vessel, consisting of two parts: the inner earther-ware pot called kundal in which fire is placed and its encasement, which is made of willow. A little wooden or silver spoon called (tsalan) is tied to the handle and completes this oriental brazier. The kangri of another type consists of only one earthenware vessel, which is called manan.[46] The kangeri symbolises the social and cultural identity of Kashmir. It is an inseparable part of Kashmiri life. It is so dear to a Kashmiri that it has become customary to gift it to newly married girl.[47] The best kangeries are made in Anantnag, Shahabad, Sopore and Charar-i-Sharief, where Kashmiri's famous saint Sheikh Noor-ud-Din is entombed.[48]

Fairs and Festivals

The observance of different festivals was a marked feature of traditional Kashmiri society. With their long and chequered history and cultural background Kashmiris of all faiths have been taking great pleasure in celebrating festivals and eloborate colourful

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46. Bates Major Charles Ellison, A Gazetter of Kashmir and the adjoining Districts of Kishtwar, Buderwah, Jammu, Naoshera, Punch and the valley of Kishenganga, Calcutta, 1873, p.38. Indian Antiquary, Vol.X V, 1885, pp.265-266; Sufi, op.cit., pp.589-90.

47. A common Kashmiri could not live without Kangari.

48. Ibid., Sufi.

ceremonies ~~was the~~ a spring festival known as Badamwari was celebrated to welcome spring that would erase the miseries and misfortunes suffered by Kashmiris due to hard and chilly days of winter.

Lawrence writes that it is not merely the love of beauty of colour that made them observe this festival, but a spirit of thanks giving that the winter with its miseries of cold has passed and the earth had come to life again, with all her bright flowers.[49] Vethi-Truvah (Jhelum festival) was another festival of secular nature, celebrated on the thirteenth day of the moon. It refers to the custom of illuminating lamps on both the banks of the river Jhelum.[50] Besides these festivals of secular nature, other religious festivals like Har Truvah. Shivratri, Navreh and Ganakatra were celebrated with great pomp and show by Hindu people of Kashmir valley.[51]

Fairs and festivals have played a very vital role in the life of Kashmiri Muslims. Among them festivals

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49. Lawrence, op.cit., p.28. The Badamwari festival was celebrated with great zeal and joy alike by Hindus and Muslims to welcome the spring or Sount. After suffering patiently the hardships of winter. People would come out of their houses and flock to Almouni garden around Hari Parbat hillrock to celebrate this festival.

50. Srivara has also given an artistic picture of this festival.

51. P.N.K.Bamzai, op.cit., PP.513-517.

may be mentioned Moharram, Id-ul-Fitr, Id-ul-Azha, Milad-un-Nabi, Shab-i-Barat, Shab-i-Qadr and Shab-i-Miraj. Nouroz was celebrated by the Shias only in the valley.[52] They took out processions on the occasion of Moharram and recited verses of heroic deeds of the hero of Kabala. The mounners beat their brests, but with the spread of education, during the Dogra period, most of the Shias gave up this practice. The Sunnis of the valley did not take part in the mourning processions. They distributed yellow cooked rice and Sharbat among the poor on this occasion.[53]

Urs-i-Shah-i-Hamadan, Urs-i-Batmallo, Urs-i-Charar-i-Sharif, Urs-i-Hazratbal, Urs-i-Naqshaband, Urs-i-Pir Dastagir, and Urs-i-Makhdoom Sahib are also celebrated by the Kashmiris with their traditional devotion.[54]

Social Customs

Both the Hindus and Muslims of the valley have an elaborate code of rituals and ceremonies with regard to birth, death and marriage. A careful study of the

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52. Lawrence, op.cit., PP.292-293, Mirza Saif-ud-Din, Op.cit., Vol.VII, 1854, PP.153 ab, Ibid. Vol.III, 1850, ff. 51a,56b.

53. Feasts were also arranged for the mourners on this very occasion.

54. Census of India, 1911, p.102; Mirza Saif-ud-Din, op.cit. 1852,Vol.V, ff. 58b, 60b, 90b, Vol.III. 1850, ff, 51a, 56b.

social customs reveals that they are still practised by the majority of people of the valley, as they were practised in the periods before western impact had not been felt by these customs and rituals, except, for a few, sections of the urban population, during the Dogra period, rest of the population continued to perform the customs and rituals.[55]

The Muslims differed from the Hindus in many of their customs with regard to birth, death and marriage.[56] But in certain cases, they depicted similarity, because both are superstitious. For example, if there was a cholera or small pox epidemic, it was attributed to the Jinns and gods or goddesses. Muslims also consulted a Pir in case some epidemic disease would occur in their families. For childless parents it was customary to visit shrines, call the aid of saints and darveshes and to keep fast in order that they might be blessed with children. Though the majority of population embraced Islam in the fourteenth century, they did not give up

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55. Mr. Ernest Neve in his book, Beyond the Pir Panjal, remarks, "the Hindus whole life from the hour of his birth till the day, when he dies and his son sets light to his funeral pyre, is regulated by an elaborate code of religious rites ceremonies and customs. These involve daily worship with ablutions and offerings to idols of flowers and food frequent fasting and the observance of a very large number of holy days". P.240, Lawrence, op.cit. PP.257-71, Bisco, op.cit., PP.153-168, A.K.Bamzai, PP.21-27.

56. Ibid.

their old customs, rituals and beliefs. Devotion to, reverence for, and an implicit trust in the shrines and pirs played a larger part in religious life of the average Kashmiri Muslim than any special veneration for the Quran or its teachings did. And although Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S) was venerated by the people, their knowledge of his teachings was meagre. For them it was the shrine which protected the believers from disease and disaster. They looked to it for aid in any enterprise. A Muslim woman who had no issue went to a priest or a darvash for a charm or visited a shrine, where she tied a piece of string (Daesh) to the inner entrance, pledging thereby that if she bore a child, she would make suitable offerings at the shrine.[57]

During times of natural calamities such as drought, earthqueks, cholera as is confirmed by Lawrence, the people would go to Chariar-i-Sharief in thousands, to confess their sins and ask for pardon and protection from the impending misfortune.[58]

The Idgah was and has continued to be an important place of congregation for Muslims, on the Eid days. It is a level grass plain, lying between the city and the Anchar

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57. Vide, M.I.Khan, P.107.

58. Lawrence, op.cit., P.288.

lake.[59] It was also a resort for Muslims, ~~during~~ at the times of diaster or natural calamities, when they would carry ~~there~~ their holy relics and emblems, ~~going there~~ in procession. They would confess their sins and pray to God for expiation for their sins of omission and comission.[60]

It will not be out of place to mention here that these Nauful processions in the city, were often conducted by the **Mullas** under direction of the rulers.[61] The Dogra Maharajas also believed in the efficacy of Nauful prayers. They believed in the religious practices of both the communities.[62]

The customs regarding marriage were also of vital importance in the traditional Kashmiri society, Wanuun a choric songs sung by women is very important so far as the marriage ceremonies of both the Hindus and Muslims are concerned, such songs give a lot of information about various customs observed on

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59. Ibid.

60. Mirza Saif-ud-Din, Op.cit. Vol.V. ff.37 ab.63 ab Vol.VIII, 1885, ff.129,ab; Khanyari Gulam Nabi Shah, Wajeel-ut Tewarkikh (M.S.) f, 69 b.

61. Ibid., Vol.VIII, 1885, ff. 129 ab.

62. Ibid.

marriage functions.[63]

Customs related with birth like Sonder and Zarakaseni (first hair cut) were also celebrated with great joy by both the communities. The Khatanhall (circumcision) among the Muslims and the thread ceremony (Maikhal) among the Hindus are the customs of religious nature. Customs relating to death, were also observed seriously, by both the Hindus and Muslims in accordance with their respective religious beliefs and practices.

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63. Wamuun is actually, a sort of commentry, depicting various practices, being performed on the occasion of marriage. There are some other ceremonies related to the marriage. Such as Phir-Saal (Bridegrooms first visit to Brids house). Gulmyoth (presenting money or other gifts to the married) Saat-Gandun or Saat-Nama-Sozun (fixing the day for marriage) etc.

C H A P T E R - III

SOCIAL FACTORS IN THE MODERNISATION OF KASHMIR.

SOCIAL FACTORS IN THE MODERNISATION OF KASHMIR

Kashmiri society till the opening of Jhelum valley cart road and advent of Christian missionaries, showed a traditional picture.

As late as 1890, Kashmir was like a medieval country. Its old institutions still existed and its economy was still based on its old crafts. But it could not remain a medieval state for ever; two decades after the opening of the Jhelum valley road in 1890, it felt the impact of outside forces and great social and cultural changes began to take place, which contributed to the modernisation of Kashmiri society.

The opening of the Jhelum valley road is a landmark in the history of Kashmir. It ended the isolation of the valley by connecting it with outside forces and influences, and thus the habits and customs of people began to change slowly.

Economic exploitation of peasants and artisans, the impact of western education introduced by Christian missionaries and the Muslim educational movement, started by Moulavi Rasool Shah as a safeguard against the Muslims not being taken to Christianity, also contributed to the modernisation of the masses, especially Kashmiri Muslims,

and thus helped to ~~transit~~ transform the society from medievalism to modernisation.

Economic exploitation of peasants and artisans

In fact the vilification of Kashmir started right from its annexation with Mughals. The Mughal annexation opened the gateway of un-ending political oppression, social exploitation and economic distress and disparity accompanied by natural calamities. The Mughals ruled through governors, who were very harsh and imposed heavy taxes on the articles, including those not found in Kashmir.[1]

After the Mughals, the Afghans ruled the valley for 67 years. Their rule reduced the people of the valley to the lowest ebb of pemuary and degradation. The whole economic structure was destroyed due to negligence ~~and~~ and heavy texation. Peasants did not tilt their land, and

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1. Francis Young husband, Kashmir Edinburgh, 1909, P.159.

P.N.K.Bamzai, History of Kashmir, Political, Social and Economic, from earliest times, Delhi, 1962, P.415.

The reign of Muhammad Shah was hot bed of intrigues. A naib-subedar of his reign namely "Agar Khan" left no stone un-turned in levying heavy taxes on the people. He was reported to have imposed tax on an elephant, which never existed in the valley. This is also witnessed by the folk saying of Kashmir as "Agar Khan un Hous",

shawl weavers left their looms unattended due to fear of heavy texation. The Afghan rule was regarded as one of the cruelest and tyrannical in the world.[2]

The Afghans were followed by the Sikhs, who ruled the valley for about twentyseven years (1819-1946). Moorecraft had witnessed the miserable condition of people during the Sikh period.[3]

The condition of peasantry under the Dogras was miserable and unhappy, due to a number of causes. Firstly, during the Sikh period they were reduced to abject poverty by their harsh treatment. Secondly, the negligent attitude of the government brought miseries to the

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and depicts the illegal taxes and exactions imposed by Mughals on the innocent people of Kashmir, J.H. Knowles, A Dictionary of proverbs and Sayings.

2. According to Lawrence, the Afghan rule was a time of "brutal tyrinnical unrelieved by good works, chivalry or honour".

3. Moorcraft says, "Everywhere the people were in most abject condition, exorbitantly taxed by the Sikh government and subject to every kind of exortion and oppression by its officers.... not one sixteenth of the cultivable surface is in cultivation and the inhabitants, starving at home, are driven in great numbers to the plains of the Hindustan". He further remarked that "the little better than the cattle...the murder of a native by a sikh is punished with a fine to the Government from sixteen to seventy rupees of which four rupees are paid to the family of the deceased if a Hindu and two rupees if a Mohammadan". Moorcraft Travels in the Himalayan Province of Hindustan and the Punjab in Ladakh and Kashmir, Vol.II, PP.293-294.

villagers,and, thirdly, the villagers had to pay all kinds of taxes, and at the same time, they were supposed to go for "Begar" for their Dogra masters.[4]

The people under the Dogras were heavily taxed. Everything was brought under the goverment control.[5] The pulse and pain experienced by common masses at the hands of revenue officials of different categories, has been expressed by so many travellers, who visited the valley during the Dogra rule. The crops, when cut by the cultivators, were collected in stacks. One half was taken as a regular government share, and additional amounts were taken as perquisites of various kinds, leaving one-third or even only a quarter with the cultivator, of this some was taken in cash and some in kind. The whole system of assessment and collection was exceedingly complicated, and workable only in the interest of corrupt officials.[6]

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4. P.N.Bazaz. Inside Kashmir, PP.61; Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir, P.411, P.N.K.Bamzai, Op.cit.,P.658.

5. Lawrence, Op.cit, P.415,P.N.Bazaz, Op.cit, P.63.

6. Francis Young Husband, Op.cit, PP.174-177, Peasants showed little interest to bring large portion of land under cultivation. A cultivator would only produce, as much as would, after payment of his revenue provide for the actual wants of himself and his family. Because he knew by experience any surplus would be absorbed by rapacious undertaking officials.

This clearly shows that even 1/4th of their produce was not left to the peasants. Little wonder then that a great majority of peasants subsisted on fruits and vegetables. Thus the heavy system of taxation brought starvation, poverty and misery to a large body of peasants in the valley.

Between 1888 and 1894 the demand for land-revenue increased from Rs. 29,56,222 to Rs. 35,75,413 respectively.[7] Almost every item of peasants' subsistance was brought under heavy taxation policy over and above the usual land - revenue. Peasants had to pay thirty kinds of taxes and ceases to the government.[8]

In times of crop failure, bad harvest, floods and famines, the Dogras did not provide any kind of relief or remissions to the people. In 1894 and 1852, untimely rains damaged the crops heavily. In 1856, earthquakes devasted the valley; in 1877, there was again crop failure and famine. In 1885, earthquakes again took heavy toll of human life. In 1893, the whole valley was flooded and 35, 428 acres of crops

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7. These figures are in correspondance with Majmuo reports of J K Tibet.

8. Some of them include, khidmatgaree, Shagdara etc.

land were inundated and 2,225 houses were damaged.[9] Officials, like Pattadars, Chakdars, Maufidars, Jagirdars and even small officials of the revenue department like Sazawalls, Kardars, Muqadams and Patwaris contributed towards the degraded condition of the peasantry.[10] In the words of Francis Young Husband, the revenue officials were worshippers of bygone, ignorant and destructive age.[11] Thus extortion and oppression at the hands of rapacious officials resulted in extreme wretchedness and abject conditions of the peasantry. It was due to these atrocities that the peasants of the time resoted to migration.

The revenue officials who owned large holdings also employed villagers to cultivate the land with free labour and considered them nothing more than the bonded slaves. They filled their purses through these ill-practices.[12]

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9. Lawrence, Op.cit., P.205.

10. Mirza, Akhbarat, Vol.I, P.96.

11. Francis Young Husband, PP. 157-158.

12. S.N.Koul, Kashmir Economics, P.63.

The Waddari System in the villages also reduced the peasantry to the level of acute poverty and pauperism. These Waddars were considered respected presence in the society and enjoyed their lives at the cost of others, sucking the blood of poor and ignorant villagers.[13]

Apart from the burden of heavy texation, the worst feature of the village life was forced labour or "Begar" which the peasants were forced to do for transport purposes from Kashmir to Gilgit.[14] The institution of "Begar" though prevalent from the earliest times in Kashmir, became rigorous during the Dogra rule. It had become a routine that each house in each village had to provide a quota of men for the purpose. They were paid from 4-7 chilkies for the double journey. In 1866 A.D. the peasants, boatmen and tradesmen were forced to carry the supplies and luggage of the troops from Kashmir to Gilgit. They were given nothing except one

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13. Ibid, P.43; G.H.Khan, Freedom Movement in Kashmir, P.307.
The Waddar was the owner of a petty shop in the village. It was from him, that the villager went on paying something every year in cash or kind and he was not able to pay the debt in full, during his lifetime.

14. This system reduced the poor villagers to the lowest ebb of social degradation. They are considered nothing, but bend slaves by their masters. P.N. Bazaz, Op.cit, PP.63-65.

seer of rice a day as their food. It is believed that a good number of them died on their way to Gilgit.

In the autumn of the same year, another group was sent, with the supplies on their backs; many of them died due to hunger and cold. But the authorities did not relent but continued sending men through the dangerous, snow-bound road. Eventually, they died due to lack of arrangements on the part of the Government.[15] The Government was very strict in getting people to do this irresponsible job of Kar-i-Bagar. The peasants were usually taken from their fields in summer, when they were needed in their fields, with the result that many people migrated from Kashmir to other parts in search of their living.[16]

Lawrence, Op.cit., P.658. For detail see "Mohammad Ishaq Khan, "Some Aspects of Corvee in Kashmir. Research Bi-Annual, Vol.I. No.11: 1976, PP.58-71.

15. Saif-ud-Din, Diary, Vol.X.F. 352, S.N.Gadru, Kashmir Papers, Robert Thropp, Kashmir mis-Government, P.75.

16. The people could hardly escape the clutches of the revenue officials. The Begar System encouraged corruption. The officials could obtain wood, grass, milk and other thing from the peasants. Lawrence, Op.oit., P.414, some officials built houses in the city with the unpaid labour of peasants under the pretex of Begar, E.F.knights, Where the three empires meet, PP.69-70.

In 1848, one of the Dogra officials took 2,520 persons for the Begar.[17] This oppressive practice led to the depopulation of some of the villages, which also had been witnessed by Pratap Singh Dogra, in one of his diaries.[18] In order to escape from the Begar, some villages were reported to have been sold to the governor of Kashmir by the villagers, 40 rupees per village.[19] The begar was also demanded for other public works like digging of canals, construction of wooden culverts and so on. As such Begar played its role in deteriating the condition of peasantry from bad to worse.

The condition of workmen and artisans during the Sikh period was miserable. So was the condition of shawl weavers. They could not maintain their families due to low wages they earned. Each shawl weaver earned four annas, of which he had to pay two annas to the Sikh governor of Kashmir.[20]

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17. Mirza, Akhbarat, Vol.I, P.74.

18. One of the Diary of Maharaja Pratab Singh gives a detailed information about the depopulation of various villages due to forced labour. Maharaja Pratab Singh, Diary of an Inspection Tour to Gilgit, 1896, Jammu Repository.

19. Lawrence, Op.cit., P.414. Once the peasant was landless, he could easily escape from the Begar.

20. Shawl Weaver lived in acute poverty.

At the advent of the Dogra rule in 1846, the condition of shawl-weavers again showed a miserable picture. Various kinds of taxes were imposed upon them.[21] An annual tax imposed upon each shawl weaver was Rs. 47.8. In addition to it, officials also charged illegal taxes, which amounted to 25 per cent of the value.[22]

The most unfortunate thing about the shawl weavers was that they could neither change their profession nor leave the valley. Wilson Andrews,[23] Richard Temple[24] and Dr. Elmlie[25] had witnessed the wreched condition of shawl weavers.

Though the Shawl industry was the major source of income to the government, nothing was done for their improvement.[26] It was in 1865, when oppression

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21. Shawl weavers had to pay taxes like Baj and Nazrans, also.

22. Robert Thropp, Op.cit., P.64, Lawrence Op.cit. P.374, Bates Major Charles Ellison, A Gazetter of Kashmir and the Adjoining Districts of Kishtwar, Baderwah, Jammu, Nowshara, Poonch and the valley of Kishenganga, Calcutta, 1873, P.254.

23. Wilson Andrew, The Abode of Snow, P.398. Lawrence, Op.cit., P.374.

24. Sir Richard Temple. Journals Kept in Hyderabad, Kashmir, Sikkim and Nepal, London, 1887, Vol.II, P.276.

25. S.N.Gadru, Kashmir Papers, P.66.

26. The Franco-German War of 1870 and the famine of 1877-1879 gave a death blow to this industry,

and heavy taxation touched its heights and their grievances were not listened to, they revolted against the government. But the revolt was put down with strong hand,[27] and nothing was done for their improvement.[28]

The labour problem in the silk factory had worsened.[29] It was, therefore, in 1924 that the workers in the silk factory had grown sick of the extortion demanded from them by the officials.[30] They began to show signs of unrest. The result was that twentyfive leaders were arrested in July 1924, and the situation became critical and acute. They refused to work and did not carry out the orders of the Director and other officials of the factory. About 200 workers assembled

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from which it never revived again. With the result people died of starvation and they had no alternative, but to leave the valley in search of food and living.

27. F.M.Hussain, Article published in Sheeraza (Eng.). Threads of Life - The shawl bauf Agitation 1865.

28. Sir Richard Temple; Op.cit, P.276, S.N.Gadru, Kashmir Papers, P.66, Sheeraza, Op.cit, p.33.

29. G.L.Koul, Kashmir past and present, P.45, G.H.Khan, Freedom Movement in Kashmir, P.210.

30. Ibid, P.211; M.I.Khan, Op.cit, P.82.

and attempted to enter Shargarhi Police Station by force. But the situation was put down by the Maharaja's cavalry and infantry.[31]

The emergence of these protests and strikes showed that the people were getting conscious of their rights. It was actually the oppression of rulers, which awakened the people from their deep slumber and taught them that they were not born to submit to that oppression, but should stand against it.

Missionaries, impact and modernisation

As has been already noted, the Kashmiri society till the advent of missionaries presented a traditional picture. But it was only after their coming to the valley that the changes began to take place in almost every aspect of Kashmiri life. They introduced a new system of education, first in India and then in Kashmir, which brought about a great change and thus heralded the dawn of modern era in the history of Kashmir.[32]

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31. Ibid.

32. P.N.Bazaz, Daughters of Vitasta, P. 210.

Western education gave a death blow to the traditional educational institutions, like Madrasas, Maktabs and Pathshals,[33] respectively run by Moulavis and Pandits, and gave birth to the state schools in Kashmir. The mission schools also worked for the emancipation of Kashmiri women and left no stone unturned in attracting the Kashmiri girls to their schools. The Girls Mission School was the fore-runner of women education and with the passage of time some other private institutions also came into existence.[34] The curriculum of mission schools introduced a sense of manliness among the students and gave them self-awareness. They realised that there was nothing bad in learning swimming for self-production and saving others' lives.[35] They learnt to help the needy and poor and at the same time they also learnt that honest work was a kind of worship.[36] They became conscious about their hygiene and turn out.

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33. Thakur Das, A Study of the Ideals of Christian, P.250.

34. Ibid.

35. Tyndale Biscoe, Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade, New Delhi, 1971.

36. Tyndale Biscoe, Fifty Years Against the Stream, Mysore, 1930, P.78.

The most superstitious and bigoted strata of Kashmiri society, the Pandits, also felt the impact of modernisation, due to efforts of missionaries. They began to realise the disadvantages of social evils prevelant in their society and began to think on modern and rational lines.[37]

The medical services rendered by the missionaries contributed in making people conscious that diseases were caused due to germs. So they should adopt clean and tidy habits to get rid of the diseases, "as an indirect result of the activities of the missionaries, the government started the first dispensary in Srinagar in 1870, which proved to be the fore-runner of the present medical service.[38] The mission hospitals and girls' schools also made their contribution in changing the physical appearance and mental outlook of Kashmiri women. Previously they were unorderly, apprehensive and distressed. But now of them began to look self-confident, neat and tidy. At the same time, they also learnt how to make their life happy and how to be helpful to society.

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37. Dermot Norris, Kashmir the Switzerland of India, P.9.

38. P.N.Bazaz, Op.cit., P.208.

Apart from their educational and medical work, the missionaries also worked for social uplift of Kashmiri society. They worked for widow remarriage and made many widows remarried.[39] They wrote many publications and brought out the ills afflicting the Kashmiri society. This criticism gave people an awareness and they felt a need for change and reform. The result was that Shabas and associations came into existence, which stood against social evils like education to girls.[40] Child marriage, high dowry, denying remarriage[41] and etc. and thus missionary activities also contributed to social reform of Kashmiri society.[42]

Kashmiri cultural life also felt the western impact. People began to wear coats and pants instead of Pheran. The school going boys began to give up their

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39. Tyndale Biscoe, Autobiography, London, 1951. P.97, School Log, Ridding the storms in Kashmir, P.13.

40. Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No.209/45-C of 1920, General Department.

41. The Ranbir, January 15, 1940, 3rd June, 1940; 22nd October, 1945.

42. Brain Holme, Educational Policy and Mission Schools, London, 1967, P.163, Report of the educational Committee re-organisation committees, 1939, P.103.

old fashion and adopted the new ones.[43] And thus slowly, almost every aspect of Kashmiri life began to feel the western impact and the signs of modernisation became more and more visible.

It is relevant to note here that Muslims of Kashmir for long were distrustful of and un-interested in modern education, which most of the Kashmiri Pandits received as an opportunity to better their future.[44] The Muslims continued to educate themselves with traditional education. They still believed in their age-old customs, beliefs and superstitions, and were still under the complete control of their religious heads, who taught them that the adoption of western education would make them infidels so that they could not differentiate between right and wrong. Western education they said, would spoil their brain.[45]

It was at this juncture that Moulavi Rasool Shah decided to lead his community, and he launched the Muslim educational movement. He had two-fold task before himself; on the one hand, he had to check that the Muslims were not converted to Christanity and, on the other hand,

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43. School Log, Still pegging away in Kashmir, PP.9-10.

44. Hari Om. Muslims of H & K . A Study of spread of education and consciousness, 1857-21, P.2.
S.L.Seru, History and Growth of Education in J&K.

45. Mohammad Yousuf, Musal manan-i-Kashmir-ki- Tarraqi ka-raz, Lahore. The Ahli Hadis, Jan. 15, 1926.

he had to introduce modern education alongwith the Islamic education among the Muslims for their better future. Keeping this idea into consideration, he laid the foundation of a primary school at Rajouri Kadal in 1899 and it was in1905 that he established the Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam for the same purpose. It was under his presidentship that the Anjuman worked for educational and social modernisation of Kashmiri Muslims, which, with the passage of time, also contributed to their political consciousness.[46]

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46. Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam Khasusi Shunara Urdu, 1981, P.11 Muhammad ud Din Fouq, Tarik-i-Aqwami-Kashmir, 1910, PP.27-28.

Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam, Srinagar, Popular Printing Press), P.2.

C H A P T E R - IV

THE MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT

THE MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT

As everywhere else, Muslims of the Jammu and Kashmir State remained for long disinterested and often distrustful of western education, which most of the Hindus welcomed as an opportunity to better their future. The Hindus, in the changed political circumstances, did not fail to avail themselves of every opportunity afforded.[1] The attitude of Muslims in India towards the western education was at first one of aversion and opposition.[2] Because the British had taken the political power from the Mughals, the rulers became the subjects, and this replacement of rulers, affected the whole of India in general and the Muslim community in particular. Muslims being the former rulers could not forget the past glory of their predecessors and as such they became inactive and were drifted from the main stream of active life. This aloofness created a gulf between the British and the Muslims.[3] The British used state-craft and underhand means to deprive the Muslims of their suzerainty. The

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1. Hari Om. Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir. A Study of spread of education and consciousness, 1857-1925, p.2.
2. R.C.Majumdar, British Paramountry and Indian Renaissance, Vol.10th, Bharti Vidhya Bhawan, Bombay, 1965, p.79.
3. Rafiq Zakaria, Rise of Muslims in Indian Politics, (Bombay, 1970), PP.1-2.

British in a bid to humble down the martial race of the Muslims encouraged Hindus against the Muslims. They followed a systematic and scientific policy of paralysing the Muslims in every field. The introduction of permanent settlement and the replacement of Persian by English as the court language in Bengal reduced them to the lowest ebb of penury.[4]

In 1857, the Mutiny took place. It is an established fact that both the Hindus and Muslims participated in it. But the British held the Muslims responsible for the Mutiny and made them special object of their vengeance. Not only were the individual Muslims persecuted but there was a systematic policy of discrimination against them all in every field of life.[5]

Even as late as 1869, a Persian newspaper in Calcutta, Durbin, complained: "Gradually Muslims were being driven out of the services and Hindus are being recruited in great numbers. It was announced in the official gazette that no Muslims should be appointed. Recently, there were some vacancies in the office of the commissioner of Sunderban (Bengal) alongwith the advertisement, there was an official note that none

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4. Madhvi Yasin, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Regeneration of the Muslim community, P.47, Islam and Modern Age, December, 1985.

5. Pattabhi Sitaramaya, History of the Indian National Congress, Vol.I, 1885-1935.

but the Hindus need apply".[6]

It was this situation which forced Syyid Ahmad to get involved in the affairs of the Muslim community; he appeared like a saviour to save his community from further decline. He started a movement to regenerate and modernise the Muslims which came to be known as the Aligarh - Movement in the annals of Indian history.[7]

A similar situation was prevailing in Kashmir, where the Dogra Maharajas did not care for the education of common people, especially the Muslims. When modern education was introduced in the valley, the Muslims did not respond. But the Kashmiri Pandits, after their initial reluctance to modern education responded gradually. The Muslims of the valley remained in the background for long.[8]

It would be pertinent to know about the traditional system of education in Kashmir, before throwing some light on the Muslim educational movement, launched by Moulana Rasool Shah, also called the Sir Sayyid-i-Kashmir.

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6. CF.Mushir-ul-Haq, Muslim Politics in Modern India, (Meerut 1970), P.42.

7. Shan Muhammad. The Aligarh,Movement Basic Documents, 1864-98 (New Delhi,1978),P.1.

8. Siyasat, April 13, 1347 Hijra, Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No. 1328/P.47 of 1924, General Department.

The traditional education

The traditional educational system was basically religic moral oriented. Both the Hindus and Muslims were concerned about the religious education of their children, so that they would prove to be the true inheritors of the religion and culture of their forefathers.[9] No wonder, then that the educational aims, curricula, organisation and practices, all articulated religious concerns. The education was equally directed to build up a moral society. That is why besides imparting religious teachings, books like Karima, Nama-i-Haq, Gulistan and Bostan were invariably taught in the upper classes.[10] Books like Hur-karam, and Sikandranama were also taught. Those who desired to advance further read Saqi-nama, Shirin-Khusrou, and other books of the same stamp.[11]

Often the teacher was simply the most religious and learned person in the community, eligible to perform religious functions. These functions included leading prayers, solemnising marriage rites and ceremonies circumcisions, funerals, settling disputes and so on.[12] The less knowledgeable teachers passed on to their students mind their superstitious passions.[13]

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9. Shrin Bakshi, Ph.D.thesis, submitted to the University of Kashmir, p.126.
10. Ibid., P.127.
11. Hari Om, op.cit,
12. Shrin Bakshi, Op.cit., p.127.
13. CF.Walter Lawrence,The Valley of Kashmir, P.286. Every Kashmiri believes that "the saint will aid if man will call,they think that dead is more efficacious than a living priest.

The traditional society was a society of illiterates, with only a very small number of educated people belonging to the religious class, which, because of tradition and the given economic, social and political climate, had established its sole monopoly in educational matters. An educated common man could only read the religious books without understanding the literal meaning.[14]

Education did not form a part of state responsibility; it, no doubt, provided cash and land grants to those who imparted education to the children but these were purely charitable grants.[15] A majority of the teachers were provided fees by the students. Besides the monthly fees, the teacher received occasional small presents, either in cash or kind, as, for instance, when a boy began a new book or when he got married or when he was invested with the sacred thread.[16]

The state had no control over the educational institutions. It was almost a private affair. All the Maktabs, Madrassass and Pathshalas were attached to the mosques and temples respectively, which were run by Moulvais and Pandits alike.[17]

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14. Shrin Bakshi, Op.cit. P.128. An educated person, could read the book, but he could not understand the meaning of what is written, in the book.

15. These grants during the Muslim period were known as Madad-i-ma'ash grants, the sikhs and Dogras call them as Dharmarth. For Dharmarth grants see Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Kashmir (Anonymous), PP.189-208.

16. Ibid.

17. Shrin Bakshi, Op.cit., P.129.

Education was given to the male sex. There was hardly any Maktaba or Madrassa for females. Some of the ulema taught their daughters how to read the holy Quran but without knowing its meaning. It was because of this reason that the majority of the Muslim women in Kashmir did not even know how to offer their prayers.[18]

This style of education articulated a just and humanistic approach to life. But at the same time it did not produce people who would have been induced to fight against the oppression of the rulers. It was because of this reason that until the modern education made its way into the old values of Kashmiri life, people had accepted this oppression and tyranny as their fate, and endured it silently.

The Muslims of Kashmir were, before the western education was introduced, under complete control of their religious heads, who told their co-religionists, that so long as they truly followed the Quran and Hadith, they would make progress. Adoption of western education would make them infidels and they would not be able to differentiate between right and wrong; western education would spoil their minds.[19] The fanatic mullas did not

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18. Census of India, 1911, P.160.

19. Mohammad Yousuf Shah, Musalmanan-i-Kashmir-ki-Tarraq - Ka-Raz, Lahore, the Ahli-Hadis, January, 15, 1926.

favour those Muslims who were for western learning and modernism. They turned against them and created problems for them.[20] The main concept prevalent among the Muslims was that those who received western education would became infidels.[21] The Muslim preachers thought that the western learning was alien to Islamic culture.[22] As it is, the Muslims in general feared that under the influence of western culture and learning their future generation would lose their Muslim identity.[23] It was because of this reason, that initially there was not even a single Muslim student among the 250 pandit boys who attended the C.M.S.School.[24]

Causes responsible for the Muslim educational backwardness

There were many factors which prevented the Muslims from taking to modern education:-

1. Kashmiri Muslims' apathetic attitude towards western education.

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20. G.H.Khan, Freedom Movement in Kashmir, P.22.
21. Y.B.Mathur, Growth of Muslim Politics in India, Delhi, 1979, P.36.
22. L.S.S.O. Melly. Modern India and the west, London, 1968, p.93.
23. Y.B.Mathur,Cit. p.34. Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam, Mazi Hall Mustaqbal, p.5.
24. Tynadle Biscoe, Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade, P.215.

2. Poverty a real impediment and not a mere excuse in the way of their education. Village boys, after completing their primary education, could not continue, because of inadequate arrangements for their living in the city as well as in towns.[25]

3. Non-availability of Muslim teachers in the State schools.

4. Absence of schools in many villages, and whereever there were schools, the instructions imparted were unpractical and unsuited to the requirements of the students.[26]

5. Fewer scholarships were granted to the Muslims of Kashmir.

6. Educated youngmen of Muslim community were not encouraged.

The indifferent attitude of the state authorities and the dearth of Muslim teachers in schools also constributed to the backwardness of Muslim in the field of education.[27]

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25. President of Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam made the presentation to the Govt.on the subject of the Muslim educational backwardness, See.File No.1609/ E-84 of 1923, J&K Archives General Department.

26. G.A.Mukhtar (Witness No.68) written statement Part I (English) Srinagar.Riots Enquiry Committee July,1931 (Jammu Ranbir Press,1931), p.233.

27. See Education Minister's note, Jammu and Kashmir Archives. File No.101/P-102-107:General Deppt. Also See Census of 1901, Part I, P.12.

The real cause of Muslim educational backwardness was their apathy and incapacity created by the Mullas. They had developed an attitude among the common masses, not to adopt anything which according to them was un-Islamic, They opposed anything which they thought was not based on tradition of the Quran as understood by them.[28] They actually were ignorant of the pure and real Islam. They were less knowledgeable, narrow-minded and conservative.

Be it as it may, the Muslims remained backward in the field of education and were attached to their age-old customs, superstitions and beliefs, whereas their pandit brotheren took the lead and secured monopoly in different departments of the state. Lawrence has rightly said that 'the Kashmiri Pandits had seized all power and authority and the Muslim cultivators were forced to work and to keep the idle Brahmans in comforts.[29]

Emergence of Rasool Shah, as a Saviour of Muslims

It was at this critical juncture that Mirwaiz Moulana Rasool Shah appeared as a Saviour of Muslim community, who aroused them from their deep slumber.

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28. The statesman, June 11, 1946. The Hindustan Times, June 2, 1946. The Paisa Akhbar, Lahore, Sept. 9, 1911. (Reports on native newspapers, 1911, P.975).
29. Sir Walter, R.Lawrence. The India we served, PP.126-127.

We are indebted to the Mirwaiz family for producing a personality like Rasool Sahib. He proved a pioneer in the difficult age. While preaching among the Muslims, he had realised, that the ignorance could be washed off by introducing modern education along with Islamic teachings, among the Muslims.[30] For this reason, he initiated a compaign of educating them on modern lines, which was termed the Muslim educational movement in the annals of Kashmir history.[31]

Rasool Sahib was imbued with progressive ideas. He believed, like Sir Syyed Ahmad Khan, that illiteracy was the main cause of backwardness among the Muslim community. He was of the opinion, "that a good education on western lines, supported by wise religious teachings from the Quran would produce young Muslims of capacity and character".[32] He through a series of public speeches made the people aware of the advantages of modern education to young generation. The Moulana was a gifted scholar

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30. See. Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam-Khasusi Shumara, Urdu, 1981, P.11. Muhammad-ud-Din Fauq Tarikha-i-Aqwami-Kashmir, 1910, PP.27-28.

31. Khasusi Shumara, Op.cit., P.11.

32. See Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam, Khasusi Shumara, PP.8-9.

whose sincerity and untiring efforts evoked a very positive responses.[33]

In momentous year of 1899, Moulvi Rasool Shah laid the foundation of a primary school, the first of its kind in the whole valley, at Rajveri Kadal in Srinagar.[34] The beginning of the institution was very humble. In raising the structure of the school, unburnt bricks and timber of cheap quality were used.[35] After this great historic event, Moulana Rasool Shah, with the help and advice of some eminent persons, founded the Anjuman-i-Nusratul-Islam in 1905, in order to mobolize public opinion in his favour.[36] He was unanimously elected the President of the organization. The officiating body was constituted of the following personalities:[37]

1.	Khwaja Hasan Shah Naqshbandhi	- Naibsadar Awal
2.	Khawaja Muhammad Shah	- Naib Sadar Second
3.	Moulavi Atiq ullah	- General Secretary
4.	Munshi Kamal	- Joint Secretary
5.	Moulavi Ahmad ullah	- Financial Secretary
6.	Munshi Saarif Ali Khan	- Joint Financial Secretary

33. Anjuman - Nusratul Islam, Srinagar (Popular Printing Press, Srinagar, p.2.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. The persons who helped Moulana in his sacred cause were, Hasan Shah Naqshbandhi, Aziz-ud-Din Kawoosa, Abdul Samad and Munshi Gulam Rasool Shah, M.I.Khan, History of Srinagar, P.139.
37. Mimute Book First of Anjuman-Nusrat -ul-Islam, Srinagar.

7. Shaikh Muhammad Husain - Accountant

8. Khawaja Aziz-ud-Din - Examiner

9. Malik Sher Muhammad - Secretary Nazim-i-Talim.

Aims and objectives

The following were the aims and objectives of the Anjum-an-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam:

(a) To equip the youth with modern education along with Islamic teachings;

(b) to make educational arrangements for the teaching of Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah;

(c) to provide right kind of leadership to the people in the cultural, economic and moral affairs;

(d) to project the character of the Muslims reflecting the value system of Islam;

(e) to create a balance between modern education and religion.

(f) to strenthen the cause of universal peace and brotherhood by promoting in them spiritual and moral consciousness.[38]

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38. Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam Kashmir.At a Glance, Nootan Press, Chandni Chowk Delhi -6.
Anjuman-i-Nusratul-Islam Kashmir, Tarikh,Kidmat-Mansoobay, Urdu, PP.6-7.

Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam as an Educational Movement

So the first organisation to initiate educational and social reform among the Kashmiri Muslims was Anjuman-i Nusrat-ul-Islam.[39] While preaching among the people, Rasool Shah had realized that an educational movement, should be launched to remove the lethargy, ignorance and backwardness among the Muslims, which finally would give rise to consciousness among them.[40] He being far-sighted enough had realised that the modern education in the long run would open to the people the gates of Government services. He was of the opinion that no nation could progress and claim to be civilized until it reached the zenith of its educational career.[41]

As has been already noted, the foundation of a primary school was laid by Moulana Rasool Shah in 1899. Poor students irrespective of caste, creed or sex were admitted to this school without levying any tution fee on them.[42] It was on 16th February 1908 that this school was raised to the status of a High School, and in the same year the first batch of six students of this school

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39. Muhammad-ud-Din-Fauq, Tarikh Aqwam-i-Kashmir. Vol.II, P.433.

40. Khasusi Shumara, Op.cit., P.11.

41. Halat-o-Rou-i-Dad, P.30. Speech delivered by Munshi Ghulam Mohammad Khadim at the second Annual Session of the Anjuman.

42. Anjuman-Nusrat-ul-Islam Srinagar(A Pamphlet),P.2.

appeared in the Matriculation examination through the Punjab University.[43] Out of the six students, five came out successful. Khawaja Gulam Ahmad Ashai secured the first position, while Pt. Sarwanand stood second, among the successful candidates of Jammu and Kashmir. The University results for the subsequent years were also brilliant . It is relevant to note here that the orthodox Mullas initially opposed the Mirwaiz and his supporters and nicknamed them as Yezar pirs.[44] In spite of strong opposition from the orthodox section of Muslim society, another primary school was started by the Anjuman at Nowshehra Srinagar in 1907.[45] In the subsequent year a middle school was opened at Amira Kadal in Srinagar.[46] Besides the financial assistance by the government, the Maharaja of Baroda donated Rs. 1500 in 1907.[47] For the maintenance of the educational institutions run by the Anjuman. Another primary school was also established at Safa Kadal in 1908.[48] With the passage of time, a good number of schools were opened in Srinagar and also in some towns of the Kashmir valley. These schools were

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43. Minute Book First, Op.cit.,Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam.

44. Yezar is Kashmir word,which means Pyjama,since these stressed the need of wearing Pyjama they came to be called as Yezar Pirs.
See G.H.Khan, History of Freedom Movement in Kashmir, P.75.

45. Minute Book First, Op.cit., Anjuman-in-i-Nusrat Islam.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid. 48. Ibid.

controlled and run by the Anjuman.[49] The Anjuman tried hard to persuade the Muslims to take to modern education.[50]

The emphasis on education laid by the Anjuman can be judged by the proceedings of its meetings held in Srinagar in 1924. In the meeting, one of the speakers spoke in favour of expansion of modern education among the Muslims. He said that it was because of educational backwardness that the Muslims were in a very bad condition. Their Hindu brotheren had gone far ahead of them. They did not wish ill for the Hindus, they were a part of their being. The speaker further said that the Maharaja had provided all facilities for the education of the Muslims, but they did not avail themselves of these facilities.[51]

Almost all the speakers praised Moulavi Rasool Shah for his devotion to the cause of Muslim education, and also praised him for his bringing home the importance

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49. Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No.J.88 of 1924, Central Department.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

of education to the Muslims of the valley.[52]

Moulavi Rasool Shah inaugrated a new era in the life of Kashmiri Muslims and infused a fresh spirit among them. The aim of his life was to arouse the Muslim community from the sloth and mire of ignorance. He took them out of darkness and gloom into the light of education. He could be called the father of Muslim renaissance in the valley, as he dedicated his whole life for the welfare and betterment of his community.[53]

Moulana Rasool Shah Sahib lived a short life of only fifty- six years; his life was a crusade in the cause of Muslim education. He never lost his heart and never felt defeated. In spite of strong opposition from the orthodox mullas, he stood strong and advocated the cause of education. In 1908, Moulavi Sahib fell ill, and did not survive his illness. Thus great hero and champion of Muslim cause passed away.[54]

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52. Ibid, Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl, Moulavi, M.Y.Shah, Munshi Ghulam Mohammad, Moulavi Abdul Haq, Raja Mohammad Shah Naqshbandi, Ghulam Hasan Vakil, Amir-ullah and Abdullah Shah were among the other apeakers, who spoke on the meeting.

53. Minute Book 14th, Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam.

54. Khasusi Shumara, op.cit., PP. 15-51.

Rasool Shah Sahib was succeeded by his brother Moulavi Ahmadullah Shah (1909-31).[55] He, like his predecessor, was very keen about the Muslim education. The credit of founding Kulia Sharaba an oriented college goes to him.[56] He was fully aware of the educational backwardness among his community. As per the census of 1911, less than one per cent of Muslim population was educated; there were only six graduates in the whole community. Among 1400-1500 students receiving education in the two State High Schools, only one hundred students were Muslims. This state of affairs made him in 1924, approach the Government of the Maharaja requesting him to improve the lot of his community with the following suggestions;[57]

(a) Compulsory primary education may be introduced in order to remove the pathetic attitude of Muslim community, as was recently introduced by the government of Punjab. Other states of India were toeing the same line.

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55. Jammu and Kashmir Archives File No.J-88 of 1924.

56. Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam Kashmir. At a glance. Shahami Press, Jamia Masjid, Srinagar, 1931, p.1.

57. Minute Book of 1925, Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam, Srinagar.

(b) An oriental school be established, which would provide education in English, Arabic and Persian, so that young Muslims would join these schools in large numbers. There was already an institution of this kind for the Hindu students which was attached to Srinagar and was called Pathshala, This Pathshala produced many graduates in Sanskrit every year and proved very useful for the Hindu community.

(c) The Muslims who take lead in education be encouraged by grant of easy terms and concessions in employment and other inducements - their recruitment to responsible posts. Adhoc appointments may be made till able and capable Muslims be produced.

(d) Educationally qualified Muslims may be given preferential treatment in service and training and that they may be appointed to higher posts so that they were encouraged. This would induce more Muslims to develop interest among themselves for the modern education.

(e) All the primary schools may be staffed by Muslim teachers and one of the state high schools may be headed by a Muslim teacher and in all other schools where the Headmasters could not be

a Muslim, a Muslim may be given the post of second master at least."

(f) Scholarships may be provided for the Muslim students.

(g) An extraordinary grant may be given to the Islamia School. And there should be a separate amount in each year's budget for the said school.

(g) Other schools run by the Anjuman should also be liberally helped.

(h) The site for Islamia School, near Pather Masjid, may be allotted as was recognised by the Punjab University.

(i) A Muslim member may be appointed in the department of education who would look after the interests of Muslims and would be able to prepare a report on Muslim education.

(j) The state should adopt a policy on the lines of the government of Bengal, where the conditions were the same, as ours, some twenty years ago in the field of education.

(k) Since the number of young Muslims educated in English is very limited, the Muslims who are well read in Urdu and Persian may be appointed in

the Departments, such as settlement, revenue, police, customs, municipalities,etc., and that where Muslims with necessary qualifications are not available requisition may be made from the Anjuman.

(l) The villages be provided with the schools and there should be one school for every village having the population of more than one hundred. It was strange that only the villagers had to pay educational tax. But they did not enjoy any educational facility.

(m) Begar system may be replaced by Thaika system.

(n) Mosques may be restored to the Muslims which were under the state control, and were used as stores for foodgrains.

(o) The Muslims should get their due representation in the assembly that may come to existence in future.[58]

In response to the above suggestions Maharaja Pratab Singh took some measures to improve the lot of Muslim community in the field of education:-

(a) The aid of Rs. 3,000, a year was given to the Islamia High School, Srinagar.[59]

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58. ibid.

59. Jammu & Kashmir Archives,File No.84/24-e of 1924.

(b) Among six inspectors, appointed by the Government, four were Muslims; a special officer's post was also created Muslim education.[60]

(c) Scholarships of Rs. 3,200 were given to the Muslim pupils of the Jammu and Kashmir State. Muslim students could also participate in open scholarships. A small allotment was also made for the girls scholarships.[61]

(d) Eighty mullas were appointed in eighty primary schools for the teaching of Quran to the lower classes.[62]

(e) Maktabs also received aid in the valley of Kashmir.

The above measures had some good effects. The number of Muslim students in the public institutions in the state increased. The number of pupils, receiving education in the middle schools also rose. Appointment of mullas in aided Maktabas and state schools contributed towards the increase of pupils in these institution.[63]

The growth and development of modern education among the Muslims was thus the direct result of the activities of the Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam, first under

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60. Ibid.

61. Ibid. 62. Ibid.

63. M.I.Khan, History of Srinagar, P.155.

the dynamic leadership of Moulana Rasool Shah and later under his successor Maulana Ahmedullah Shah. By launching the movement for education among the Muslims of the valley of Kashmir, Maulana Rasool Shah did a commendable service to the Kashmiri Muslims. His role in shaping the destiny of Kashmiri Muslims is memorable. It is this modern education that enabled them to look for their rightful place in the community of nations. Had Moulana Rasool Shah lived for sometime more, the Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam would have worked wonders towards the socio-economic amelioration, quick educational advancement and better political consciousness among the Kashmiri Muslims.

C H A P T E R - V

SOCIAL REFORM AND REACTION

SOCIAL REFORM AND REACTION

Every society which seeks to recover itself from the morass of ignorance, degradation and decadance has to take resort to reform itself through the educational and socio-religious movements. Since the advent of man in the world, he has been making efforts to improve the standard of his life socially and economically. Change in the social pattern of community is absolutely essential because social conditions do not remain static for ever. Those who do not change with the changing circumstances lose the battle of life.

The Indian society has always changed with the changing times. Its history shows the emergence of various socio-religious, reform movements to remove the ignorance and social evils from the society. In the sixth century B.C. Jainism and Buddhism occurred against the dominance of tradition-bound preistly class, caste system and ritualism. Buddhism, particularly, sought to remove the social and religious evils from the Indian society, as it stood for abolition of caste-system, cumbersome rituals and monopoly of the Brahmans. It sought to change the existing social, set up of Indian society, by injecting vigour and dynism to the social order.[1]

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1. N.N.Ghosh, Barly History of India, (Revised edition) Allahabad, 1964, pp.45-66.

What Budhism did in the sixth century B.C., was once again repeated by the medieval reformers like Kabir and Nanak.[2]

What had been done by these early reformers was a remarkable job in the context of Indian conditions, and it was precisely required to be done during the 19th century. The brunt of launching the reform movement then fell on eminent reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, J.C. Vidyasagar, Sir Syyid Ahmad Khan and others. These reformers stood to meet the challenge of the Christian missionaries and to keep pace with the new spirit of technology and science of the developing west.[3]

The same situation was prevalent in Kashmir in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The social life of Kashmir represented a dismal picture, the Kashmiris suffered from social ills, which could never be sanctioned by any religion nor could be allowed to

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2. These two reformers were considered the main pillars of Bhakti movement. The tried to bring different castes and religions into a closed group. However, they were successful in saving Hinduism from annihilation. S.M. Jaffer, Some cultural aspects of muslim rule in India, Delhi, 1972, pp.154,205 and 208, Rekha Misra, Women in Mughal India, Delhi, 1967, p.139.

3. A. R. Desai, Social Background of Indian Nationalism, Bombay, 1976, pp.281-307.

exist by any norms of humanity. The most horrible social evils and practices were the enormous wastage of money on marriage ceremonies,[4] child marriages[5] the prevalence of widowhood[6] and similar other social evils. Superstition had become an integral part of social life. Godmen and astrologers were exerting great influence on the personal lives of the people.[7] And religion was completely dominated by the corrupt and ignorant priests, who knew nothing about their religion. In order to maintain their power and domination over the people, these

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4. Biscoe, Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade, New Delhi, 1971 (Reprinted), P.79. Walter R. Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir, London, 1895, P.262: Koshur Samachar, May 1980, Vol.XV, No.5. pp.2-3, 7-8; P.N.K. Bamzai, Socio-Economic History of Kashmir, Delhi, 1962, pp.303-304.

5. Census Report of 1931, Jammu and Kashmir, Vol.XXIV, Part I, pp.141-169: Census Report of 1901, Vol. XXXI, Part I, p.88: The Kashmiri Pandits, A.K.Bamzai Calcutta, 1939, p.32: Narsingh Das, Tarith-i-Dogra Desh, Jammu, 1967, p.8621.

6. Muslim personal law did not prohibit the widow-remarriage, whereas, it was strictly prohibited among the Kashmiri pandits inspite of this Kashmir muslim women looked up it with disfavour, it may be due to impact of their Hindu, bretheren. Census of 1901, Jammu and Kashmir, Vol.XX, Part I, P.147: A.K.Bamzai, op.cit, p.32.

7. Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir, op.cit, pp.393. Biscos, Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade, op.cit., P.306.

priests deliberately kept the people ignorant and superstitious. Further they commercialised religion by introducing ceremonies and offerings to signalize the various phases of life, from birth to death.[8]

The core of life was still more deplorable. The wave of change and reform had been sweeping over Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra and other parts of India for quite sometime, before it reached Jammu and Kashmir. It is relevant to point out here that Kashmir's peculiar position prevented this wave of change from reaching the valley at the same time it had reached other parts of India.[9]

However, the establishment of the Dogra rule[10] brought Kashmir close to Jammu and then to Punjab with the establishment of Maharaja Pratab Singh's rule, Kashmir became fully exposed to the outside world. It was during his reign that a considerable change occurred in

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8. A.K.Bamzai,op.cit., Appendix I, II and III, pp.77-79 and 80, Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir. op.cit., pp.257-271.

9. W.R.Lawrence, Imperial Gazetter of India, Provincial Series, Jammu and Kashmir,Calcutta, 1909, Vol.XV, p.72. Gazetter of Kashmir and Ladakh,Delhi 1880, Reprinted in 1974, pp.5-7, A.K.Bamza, Geography of Jammu and Kashmir State, Calcutta, 1913, p.2.

10. In the year 1846,Treaty of Amristsar was signed a Kashmir was sold to Dogras in lieu of Rupees 75 of Lakhs.

means of transport. A reconnaissance of the country, for a railway line to connect Punjab and Kashmir started in 1887 and four routes were approved.[11] J.A.Anderson, Engineer-in-chief and a staff of nine engineers were appointed to carry out detailed survey of the Jhelum route.[12] In 1888 Col.Pamry Nisbet was asked to construct the cart road from Rawalpandi to Srinagar, which was completed within two years.[13] In 1890, a railway line between Jammu and Punjab was completed.[14] The Banihal Cart Road between Jammu and Kashmir was built in 1915.[15] The development of these means of transport was also accompanied with the growth in means of communication, viz., telegraphy and streamlining of postal system. A Telegraph line was laid between Rawalpindi and Srinagar and this line was extended from Srinagar to Drass in 1882 and from Srinagar to Gilgit in 1885.[16] By the end of 1866, the British completed arrangements for speedy

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11. Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Report, 1890-91. P.129: M.I.Khan, History of Srinagar, p.35, Prior to the establishment of Residency in 1885 Kashmir, communication in Kashmir was primitive, country boats along with the rivers being the only means of communication. The River Jhelum was the main artary of commerce in Kashmir.

12. Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Report, 1890-9, p.128.

13. Jammu and Kashmir Archieves, File No. 76 1139, 1946 (Samvat).

14. Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No.1 of 1884, General Department.

15. Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No. 356 of 1947, (Samvat)

16. Administrative Report of Jammu & Kashmir, 1890-91 Appendix VIII.

postal service in Kashmir. In 1894, the British took over the state postal department.[17] These agencies opened the flood gates of new ideas to Kashmir. This made the socio_religious reform movement prosper in the valley. It is necessary to note that the missionaries, activities in the valley created a sharp reaction. The aim of the Christian missionaries was to convert the Kashmiris to Christianity.[18] The direct result of the missionaries was the birth of socio-religious reform movements in Kashmir. These movements on the one hand tried hard to eradicate the evils and on the other hand acted as a check on their youngmen being converted to Christianity.

It is a known fact that the missionaries introduced English education in the valley, as they had already introduced it in the other state of India. But they had their own interest behind it ; they wanted to convert the people to Christianity. This grave danger was realised by the elitish class of Muslim society. They had very limited means at their disposal, but they were rich in terms of their earnestness and determination to oppose this serious threat. They knew that British

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17. Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No. 356/1/1923 (Samvat).

18. The modern means of communication opened the flood gates of new ideas and thinking.

control over India would continue for long and to overthrow it immediately would not be possible. Hence, the best course would be that on the one hand, we acquired the knowledge of western arts and science and, on the other hand, kept the youth aware of their own religion, culture and heritage, keeping this end in view, Moulana Rasool Shah introduced his movement of educating Muslims on western lines as well as on Islamic lines too. It was this movement that awakened the Muslims educationally and, with the passage of time, became responsible for the changes the Muslims felt in their social life.[19]

The credit for creating the atmosphere of socio-religious reform movements among the Muslims goes to the Mirwaiz family, who took muslims to modern education, under the banner of Anjuman Nusrat-ul Islam, an organisation founded by the Mirwaiz, for the educational, upliftment of his community. It was the efforts of this very Anjuman, which brought the Muslims on the part of modernisation.[20]

The Anjuman's role in the field of education has already been discussed. The following lines will throw

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19. Anjuman-Nusrat-ul-Islam, Tarikh-Kidmat, Aur, Mansobai, pp.4-6.

20. Anjuman-Nusrat-ul-Islam, Khasusi Shurmara,.

light on the role played by the organisation in the social life of Kashmiri Muslims.

Anjuman's Role in the Field of Social Reform

The second task after Muslim education the Anjuman undertook was the eradication of social evils, which had existed among them for a long time. The leaders of the Anjuman had realized that social reforms were necessarily to be introduced in the society and with the passage of time, it would bring an all-round development of their community. Muslims had become lethargic and tradition bound due to their centuries of sufferings under different rulers of the land. Due to their ignorance and illiteracy they had developed many social evils and customs, which needed to be reformed, so that the community would be brought to the level of modernisation. This task was done by Mirza Ghulam Mustafa, one of the top ranking members of the Anjuman. He had realised that he could not do this single handed. In 1922, he put this issue before the Anjuman. This awakened the Anjuman to the need to think in terms of social reform, and a social reform committee was appointed for the purpose.[21] This committee was headed by Munshi

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21. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, Personal Diary 1907-50. Manuscript unpublished dated 4 July, 1922, item 3.

Assadullah,[22] A list of all social evils was prepared by Munshi Sahib. The committee[23] afterwards met at the residence of Mirza Ghulam Mustafa, on December 20, 1925 to recommend the following reforms:[24]

Firstly, the Fatiah ceremoney (memorial service for the dead) held on Fridays be abolished.

Secondly, only two dishes of meat and two dishes of vegetables be prepared and served to the guests at marriages.

Thirdly, the dowry given to the married couple should be worth 25 to 400 rupees. It would not be out of place here to mention that the Kashmiri Pandits spent much more on their marriages than their Muslim bretheren. But the Muslims spent much on Wazwan (feast).[25]

Dowry system, practically, did not exist among the Muslims, whereas it had attained a law-like position among the Pandits of the valley.[26]

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22. Ibid. dated October 5, 1922, Item 2.
23. Ibid. dated December 20, 1925, item 3.
24. Ibid.
25. M.I.Khan, History of Srinagar, p.110.
26. Ibid.

Fourthly, on the circumcision ceremony, only the concerned relatives should be invited. The fee for performing circumcision operation to the barber should be paid only by the parents and not by the guests on the occasion. It was also laid down that the parents should also contribute a rupee or two to the Anjuman on this occasion.[27]

Lastly, the sending of Khabras be stopped.[28] But the reformers could not achieve much in this direction.

The aim of launching reform movements in the Muslim community was to save extravagant expenditure on marriage ceremonies and on other functions like circumcisions, etc. The Mirwaiz-i-Kashmir preached these reforms in every shrine and mosque at the time of prayer meetings. The people were told that Islam disallowed a person to spend too much on any kind of occasion, be it death, or marriage. The Anjuman also published Dastur-ul-Amal in order to

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27. Minute Book First of Anjuman Nusrat-ul-Islam.

28. G.H.Khan, op.cit. p.65.

Khabras were paying a courtesy call to the bride and taking gifts in cash or kind to the in-laws of daughter.

explain to the people the need of these social reforms. Every one could get this tract on cash payment. It was in fact one of the remedies for economic evils of the Muslims of Kashmir.[29]

Anjuman's contribution in the field of religious reforms

The Anjuman's religious ideology revolved round the concept of 'Tawheed', that is, God is the Absolute Reality without any partner. It was through this belief that the Anjuman preached the concept of unity and cooperation among the Muslim masses, who had hitherto remained more or less scattered.[30] Moulana Rasool Shah, the founder of the Anjuman, contributed a lot through his sermons and gave a new direction to the art of Waizkhani. He made the illiterate Muslims of the valley acquainted with Islamic teachings through his sermons.[31]

A special issue of the Anjuman's journal relates an event of an illiterate person, who fell in discussion with a qualified student of Deoband. This student was greatly impressed by the depth of knowledge, the Kashmiri

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29. Ibid.

30. Ibid. p.4.

31. Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam Khususi-Shirmara, p.48.

Muslim possessed. The Deoband student asked him to show him his library. The latter told him that he was not educated but he simply had educated himself by attending the Waiz majalis of Moulana Rasool Shah. The Deoband scholar was very much impressed and inevitably came to have profound respect for the founder of the Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam.[32]

Moulana Rasool Shah made the tradition bound and supersititious Kashmiri Muslims understand that without Quranic knowledge nobody could get salvation. He made both illiterate and literate people memorize many suras (chapters) of the Quran along with their meanings. Some of his disciples became preachers.[33]

Moulana Rasool Shah preached against all un-Islamic practices observed by the Kashmiri Muslims. After him, Moulana Ahmadullah toed the line, with the same devotion. But after his death, his successors fell in to petty politics and did nothing worthwhile for the social and moral uplift of the Muslims.[34]

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32. Ibid, p.50.

33. Ibid., P.48.

34. Jammu and Kashmir Archives File No. J-88 of 1929.

However, Moulavi Rasool Shah took the Muslims out of the rut of leatharg̈y, ignorance and traditionalism. He was the father of Muslim modernism in the valley, who aroused the Muslims from their deep slumber and taught them to March with the times He dedicated his life to the cause of Muslim reformation and regeneration.

Ahl-i-Hadith Movement

Islam has been the religion of humanity since Adam was created by Almighty God on the earth. Adam was the first prophet, who told the people to believe in the eneness of God.[35] Some people wrongly believe that the religion was founded by Prophet Mohammad (P.b.U.H). But this is absolutely a wrong assertion. Mohammad (P.b.U.h) has himself said that "I only preach and follow, what is being revealed to me".[36] Of the historical fact is that Mohammad revealed the pristine spirit of Abrahamic religion under the guidance of the Quran. In the context of the Quran the religion of Abrahaim found perfection in his Sunnah.

Islam in the literal sense is the way of ax life encompassing all aspects of life of an individual, as well as a community.[37] It does not represent a mere set of

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35. Tauhid Simply means to believe - eneness of God and his absolute reality. It is the fundamental basis of the religion of Islam, which was taught by the Prophet of Islam. See Dictionary of Islam, P.629.

36. Al-Quran, 26th Para, Sura Ahqaf, Ayat.8.

37. Qayamuddin Ahmad. The Wahabi movement in India, Calcutta, 1966.p.9.

rituals and dogmas but it represents a way of pious and disciplined life. The word Islam itself means a total submission to the will of God and obedience to His law. But the submission to the will of God should not be unwilling, but one must subjugate and submit oneself, wholeheartedly and willingly, and love and enjoy the submission. But the unwilling submission should not be there. Iblis is the most notorious example of unwilling submission. Allah asks His followers in the Quran to enter into Islam completely.[39]

All prophets preached that except God, there is none who deserves to be worshipped. Everyone is responsible to God for his deeds, which will be judged by Him on the day of resurrection. The essence of the teachings of all these prophets was righteousness in life.[40]

Islam was created by the Almighty in Arabia and it spread far and wide to most parts of world. Unfortunately Islam got adulterated by the philosophies of other nations, which were conquered by the Muslim conquerors. The Muslims borrowed many practices and customs from other religions and in course of time, Islam lost its original simplicity and dynamism.

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39. Al-Quran, Second Para (Sayaqool) Sura Bakr. Ayat - 208.

40. Al-Quran, Second Para, Sura Bakr.

Adulteration of Islam in Kashmir

Kashmir was the land of Buddhism and Brahmanism before Islam entered the valley. In spite of the conversion of people to Islam, they did not part with their old beliefs and customs.[41] The people could not leave the idol-worship; however, they took it in a different way. They started to worship the shrines, saints and relics, which were only to be revered and obeyed. This practise of people gave rise to polytheism (Shirk) and infidelity (Kufr).[42]

Idol-worship got changed into grave worship, Pir Parasti and other un-Islamic practices. The shrines, saints and their relics were regarded as a great source of help. The erection of tombs and celebrating of festivals came to be regarded as an Islamic practice. The priests of the temples were replaced by attendants of the shrines. The making of rounds at the shrines, tying of strings there and wearing of amulets were the practices which became very common among the Muslims. Keeping zoog was also prevalent among the Muslims of Kashmir.[43] All these practices show that they had embraced Islam, but at heart

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41. W.R.Lawrence. The Valley of Kashmir, Srinagar, 1967, p.286.

42. D.C.Sharma, Kashmir under the Sikhs, New Delhi, 1983, p.83.

43. Sofi Ahmad Muslim, Tarikh-i-Ahlehadis, Jammu wa-Kashmir, Delhi, 1948, p.86.

were Hindus. They made their earlier rituals a part of their socio-religious life. It is worthy to note that the Kashmiri Muslims were not Vaishnavites, but still they did not take meat on certain days.[44] They also followed other un-Islamic practices, like, boiling of rice in turmeric and making of sweet bread. These preparations were distributed at the shrines or on the road sides, among the people to please God and godly men.[45] Erecting shrines and lighting candles on the graves, reciting of the verses of the Holy Quran over the dead, spreading of cloth, with Quranic Ayats at the graves were some of the practices of the Muslims of the valley.[46]

In following the practice of grave worship, relic worship and saint worship, Kashmiri Muslims drifted from the right spirit of Islam. This ultimately gave birth to customs and created many socio-economic problems.[47] The

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44. The Vaishnavites were the following of the principle of non-injury to living beings, they did not take meat. The Muslims, who had faith in Reshimol Sahib at Anantnag and Srinagar did not take meat during the fairs of Reshimol Sahib, they feared that if they would take meat, their houses would get burnt.

45. Ibid.p.65.

46. Ibid.

47. These irreligious practices are still being performed by a good number of people in the valley.

Pirs in order to maintain their hold on their community, had moulded the minds of Muslims in such a way that they believed that the natural occurrence, may it be good or bad happened due to their pleasure and displeasure. To avert any natural calamity, people followed practices which were contrary to the spirit and teachings of Islam.[48] With the passage of time, they became superstitious, which impaired their rational thinking, and they became incapable of recognizing and investigating the scientific theory which governs the Islamic faith. As a result, they afforded a very good opportunity to the priests of shrines and Pirzadas to exploit them in whatever way they liked.[49]

The priest-ridden character of the Kashmiri society could be judged[50] by the calls the Mullahs gave to the people to carry the relics, from one place to another

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48. The Holy Quran clearly says, that the gods, whom you call for help, they all by joining together cannot make even a fly and if a fly confiscate anything from them, they cannot get it back. Both the help seekers and help givers are weak. This saying of Quran makes it clear beyond doubt, that God is absolute authority and power-full one.

49. These Babazada and Prizadas had dominated the shrines. They inspite of being illiterates were respected by the common people. It were these Pirzadas and babazadas, who had adulterated Islam Kashmir for their own selfish ends and benefits. Lawrence , op.cit., p.287.

50. Ibid, p.289.

to ward off a calamity. In 1914-15, such calls were made to the people to ward off the cholera. In these years, people went to Tsrar along with relics of Shah Hamadan to hold prayer meetings at the shrine of Shiekh-noor-ud-Din Wali (R.A.) People responded to these calls blindly, without knowing that nothing could come out from these un-Islamic practices.[51]

During the period of our research, the so-called preachers and teachers used shrines as business centres for accumulating wealth for themselves, instead of Preaching true tennents of Islam to the people. This gave a great blow to the basic principles of Islam ~~and~~ transforming converted its simplicity and faith in one God in to extravagancy and belief in many saints and Pirs. This led to a clear-cut deviation by common Muslims from what is recited in Surah-Fateh in every Nimaz.[52]

As such Islam lost its pure and original form. To bring Islam to its pristine purity, a movement was launched so that all irreligious practices could be waived off from the Muslim society.

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51. Civil and Military Gazette, April 30, 1894.

52. Al-Quran, Surah Fateh.

Genesis of Ahl-i-Hadith Movement

Ibn Taimiya, during the thirteenth century, felt the need of reforming the Muslim society, which he realised had resorted to such practices that according to him were un-Islamic and against the principles of Shariat.[53] During his time, he found the whole atmosphere around him contaminated by false mystics; people followed practices which were directly against the principles of Shariat.[54] He believed that Darvashee had introduced un-Islamic practices like Sama and Rags (music and dance) at Khanqahs and idolatrous practices of worshipping the tombs of saints.[55] Ibn Taimiya held the ulema responsible for introducing all un-Islamic practices and superstitious into Islam. He was very critical of un-Islamic practices and even rejected various forms of sufism.[56] He used derogatory language against the worship of the grave of Prophet Muhammad (P.b.U.H). He vehemently opposed tomb-worship, but was himself buried in the burial place of the sufis and his tomb even today, after so many centuries, is an object of reverential homage of a number of visitors.[57]

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53. Juluis Germanus, Modern Movement in Islam. Calcutta, 1932, P.9.

54. Z.M.Quraishi, p.61.

55. Juluis Germanus, op.cit., pp.9-10.

56. H.Lagast, Encyclopedia of Islam, London, 1971, London, 1971, Vol.III, PP.951-52.

57. Juluis Germancus, op.cit., p.9-10.

After his demise, Muslim society was once again in the grip of un-Islamic customs and superstitious practices. These practices continued till the emergence of Ibn Abdul Wahab of Najd, on the scene (1903-92). He was born at Ayaina, a small town in Dariya (Najd).[58] He received his early education in Basara and Madina, and equipped himself with the study of theology and jurisprudence and attended several centres of Islamic studies. He also studied the doctrine of Ahmad Ibn Hambal, the founder of the last of the four orthodox schools of jurisprudence. He also studied the writings of Ibn-Taimiya.[59]

Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab was greatly disgusted when he found his community, sunk in shirik and bidat (heresy).[60] He raised his voice against prevailing un-Islamic practices, like saint worship and grave worship. He launched a movement to purify Islam and to bring it to its pristine purity. He wanted to present on Islam, based on the Quran and Hadith, and to clear it from all dogmas and

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58. Carl Bockelmanu, History of the Islamic People, P.352; J.B. Philby, Arabia, London, 1930, p.8. H.A.R.Gibb, Shorter encyclopedia of Islam, London, 1961, p.621.

59. Qayamuddin Ahmad, op.cit. p.19. Carl Book Imamm, op.cit. p.352; Juluis Germanus, op.cit. pp.11-13, Mohammad Ibn Abdul Wahab, Kitab-ul-Tauhid, under trapslation by Abu-Abdullah - Mohammad bin-Yousuf-ul'Surati, p.20.

60. Shirik and Bidat are un-Islamic practices, and are totally against the Shiarat.

evil customs, which were deep rooted in the Muslims society.[61] His efforts for the reformation of his community earned him displeasure and enmity, but he did not lose heart and carried on his mission with devotion. His movement spread far and wide. India also felt the impact of the movement.[62]

Ahli Hadith Movement in India

In India, it was Sayyed Ahmad Barelvi who played an important part in awakening the consciousness of the Muslim community against un-Islamic custom.[63] But the first soul, who raised the banner of reformation in India was Shaikh Sayyed Ahmad Sarhindi, also known as Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Sani.[64] His mission was carried on by his pupil Shah Waliullah Dehlavi.[65] He was one of the intellectual saints of the 18th century. He had studied the deplorable condition of India Muslims and was highly distressed.[66] Keeping in view the political situation of

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61. Kitab-ul-Tauhid, op.cit. p.20.

62. Quyammudin Ahmad, op.cit. p.19, Juluds Germamus, op.cit. p.279.

63. Mohammad Yasin, studies, Historical and Cultural, Jammu, 1964, pp.125-163.

64. Mohammad Yasin. A Social History of Islamic India, Lucknow 1958, pp.145-146.

65. He had worked on various aspects of religion. His academic contribution to the Islamic studies is enough to immortalize his name but at the same time his active influence on the regeivenaration of Indian muslim society is more remarkable. Qayamuddin Ahmad, op.cit. p.29.

India he propagated the doctrine of Jehad.[67] His son, Shah Abdul Aziz carried forward the mission of his father.[68]

Sayyid Ahmad was deeply influenced by the religious ideology of Shah Abdul Aziz.[69] He preached the doctrine of Waliullah school and as such his movement is also termed as Waliullah Movement.[70] Sayyid Ahmad denounced the prevailing customs and declared that all un-Islamic practices followed by the Muslims were borrowed from Hinduism. His mission achieved great success; he established a permanent centre at Patna, which became the focal point of Wahabi activities in British India.[72]

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66. S.A.S.Rizvi, Shah Wali Ullah and his times. Australia, 1980, p.313.

67. Taufiq Ahmad Nizami, Muslim political thought and activity in India. The first half of the nineteenth century, 1969, p.19.

68. Abu Yahya imam Khan, Hindustan mai Ahli-Hadith-ki IInd Khidmat, 1937, Aligarh, p.11.

69. Ziya-ul-Hassan Farooqi, The Deoband School and the demand for Pakistan, Bombay, 1963, p.2.

70. Ahmad Farooqi, Urdu and Wahabi Adab, Delhi, 1967, p.5.

71. Wilfred Countwell Smith, op.cit. p.188.

72. Ram Gopal, Indian Musalman, A Political History, Lucknow, 1959, p.23, H.A.R. Gibb, op.cit. p.621.

Ahl-i-Hadith Movement in Kashmir

During the period of our research the Kashmiri Muslim society presented a very sad picture. They were backward in all fields of life, educational, social and economic. General masses were ignorant and were under the grip of incompetent religious heads, who knew nothing about the pure Islam. It was because of this reason that Kashmir did not witness any reform movement, until the beginning of the 20th century. People did not have any such organisation, where they could talk about their religious affairs, evil customs or superstitions, prevalent in the society.[73]

It was during the period of Ranbir Singh (1856-1884) that Hussain Shah Batku, a resident of Madeen Sahib Srinagar, who had received his religious education from certain literary centre in India like Deoband, felt the need of reforming the Kashmiri Muslim society.[74] Hussain Shah was one among the pupils of

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73. Despatch to secret committee, National Archives of India Foreign, 22 January, 1848, No.10; Foreign Sec; 28 January 1848, Nos.41-42, p.7; Nisbeates letter to the Secretary to the Government of India dated March 16, 1889, Foreign Sec. E.April, 1889, p.7. Papers relating to Kashmir affairs, Sec.E. August, 1889. Nos. 162-203, p.27; Lawrence, The India we served, London, 1928, p.128, Census Report, 1921, Part I, Jammu and Kashmir, pp.60-61 See also Census of India, 1911, pp.32-33.

74. Mohammad Assadullah Quraishi, Tarikh-i-Ahmadiyat, Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit (1975), p.30.

Nazir Hussain Dehalvi, one of the prominent leaders of Ahl-i-Hadith Movement, In India.[75] On his return to Kashmir, he felt distressed to see the religious condition of the people. He stood against Pir-mureeds, worship of saints, graves, Asthans and other superstitious, practices and evil customs, prevailing in the vallley. He believed, like Sayyed Ahmad, that all these principles were borrowed from Hinduism.[76]

His massage revolved round the belief of Tauhid ie., oneness of God. In his lectures he advocated the cause of Tauhid, and told the people to follow strictly the Quran and Hadith, but he was opposed by Muslims and Muftis of Srinagar. They had deliberately kept the common masses ignorant and had fed them on superstitions just to save their economic interests.[77] They issued Fatwas against him condemning him as an infidel,[78] and forbade Muslims from any kind of contact with him.[79] The Maharaja was

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75. Nazir Hussain Dehalvi was a great Muhaddith, jurist and eregesist. He was respected for his knowledge and his devotion to the cause of Tauhid, Mohammad Ibrahim Siyalkoti, Tarik-i-Ahl-i-Hadith, pp.417,419; Quyammuddin Ahmad, op.cit., pp.286-287: Gulam Nabi Mubariki, Khutba-i-Sadarat, 1957, p.31.

76. Moulvi Anwar Shah, Basha ral ul-Muminean, 1360,H, Brocas Press, Srinagar, pp.36-37.

77. Mohammad Assadullah Quraishi, op.cit., p.301, Moulvi Anwar Shah, op.cit. p.36: Hassan Shah,op.cit., p.442.

78. Moulvi Anwar Shah, op.cit. p.36.

79. Muslim, April 3, 1958, pp.11-12.

compelled to issue an order for his exile from Srinagar. Accordingly, orders were issued for his eviction from the city. After his expulsion, he moved towards Shopian, where Moulavi Anwar Shah had already started preaching the tenets of Ahl-i-Hadith.[80]

Moulavi Anwar Shah learnt Quran and jurisprudence from Hussain Shah and both the leaders started their reforming activities at Naasnoor,[81] in Shopian. But they could not make their way there because of the pressure of Ahmadiyas there. Sayyed Hussain Shah moved to Yaripora, where he received a very good response from the common people and was able to spread his message in a number of villages of Shopian Tehsil. He won a considerable number of followers there. Lawrence writes that "about two hundred families in Shopian Tehsil accepted the Wahabi faith".[82]

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80. Moulavi Ghulam Nabi Mubariki, Khutba-i-Sadarat, 1957, Anjuman-Ahl-i-Hadith, Srinagar, p.3 2, M.A. Quraishi, op.cit., pp.30-31; Sofi Ahmad Muslim, Tarikh-i-Ahl-i-Hadith, Jammu wa-Kashmir, 1984, Delhi, p.65.

81. M.A. Quraishi, op.cit., pp.30-31.

82. Ibid: Moulavi Hassan Shah, op.cit. I.P. 442: Lawrence., The Valley of Kashmir, op.cit., p.285. Sayyed Hussain Shah also received co-operation of Atta Mohammad Iban, a Rais of the time, and was able to spread his movement in a number of villages of Shopian tehsil, M.A.Quraishi, op.cit., p.285.

After the demise of Hussain Shah, the movement surived due to the efforts of Moulavi Anwar Shah of Shopian.[83] He was very strict and severe in his criticism of tomb worship, grave worship and other ~~an~~ un-Islamic practices .[84] Common people guided by the less knowledgable Mullas and Muftis created a number of problem for the leaders of Ahl-i-Hadith movement.[85] But nothing could stop them from their activities and finally they succeeded in establishing a proper organisation in 1930. The Hanafi Muslims and their religious heads tried their best to damage the reputation of Moulavi Anwar Shah.[86] He was described as the man of low origin. But their opposition could not stop him in his activities. He went on

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83. Mohammad Ayub Betab and Abdullah Taari, Neerposh, pp.13-15.

84. Moulavi Anwar Shah, Diwan-i-Anwari, 1350 H' Anjuman-i_Gurba-i-Ahl-i-Hadith,Zaldagar,pp.12-17.

85. The Ahl-i-Hadith leaders dis-allowed to the mosques of Hanafis. Fatwas were issued that they should not be burried in the muslim graveyards. Nomuslim was permitted to get married with them. Muslim 5th April, 1961, p.71, 2 March, 1960,p.8, November, 1941, pp.7-9.

86. Moulavi Mohammad Saiadat, Halat-i-Amir-i- Brocas Press,Srinagar,Kashmir, 1358,H. p.22.

propagating his idea and brought a number of Muslims under his direct influence. The Government arrested him, but after his release he resumed his activities and infused life into the movement.[87]

In order to spread his message of pure Islam, he visited Bhadarwah and Ladakh.[88] During his stay in Ladakh, he came into contact with Haji Mohammad Shahdad, the prominent Shawl trader of Kashmir, who afterwards became his follower.[89] A number of people became his disciples in Ladakh. During his stay there, he was arrested in order to avert any kind of conflict between Ahl-i-Hadith and orthodox Muslims. But he was released soon and after his return to Srinagar, he laid the foundation stone of Ahl-i-Hadith Mosque at Zaldagar, the first of its kind in Srinagar. Some more mosques were also constructed in other parts of the city by the Ahl-i-Hadith.[90]

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87. Moulvi Abdul Ghani, Khitijat-ul-Kubra, pp.3_4 Also see Moulavi Anwar Shah, Talim-i-Sunnat, 3 vols, 1358 H', Anjuman-i-Gurba-n-Ahu-i-Hadith, Srinagar, pp.5-6.

88. Mohammad Ayub Betab, Neerposh, op.cit., pp.13-14.

89. Sofi Ahmad Muslim op.cit. p.104.

90. Ibid, pp.104-105, Gagar Mosque at Zainakadal, Jamia Bazar Mosque at Bohri Kadal, Qazi Mosque at Karfali Mohalla, were some of the other mosques, which were constructed by the persons connected with the Ahl-i-Hadith.

It was in the year 1923 that the Ahl-i-Hadith founded the Anjuman-i-Ahl-i-Hadith,[91] and Haji Mohammad Shahdad was made its first President.[92] Abdul Aziz Chiken and Ali Sahib Shahdad were made Secretary and Cashier respectively.[93] Moulavi Ghulam Nabi Mubarki was also associated with the Anjuman Ahl-i-Hadith. His association with the Anjuman proved to be of great significance. He being a very good writer, was able to attract a good number of people, on account of his vast learning and powerful oratory.[94]

Mullah's Opposition to Ahl-i-Hadith

The less knowledgable mullahs and Muftis, who had complete control over the Muslim society called the Ahl-i-Hadith Wahabis. They also nick-named them as Kutas, Ahl-i-Tiawwa, Kufi and Najdi also.[95] The Anjuman was declared as a body of Kafirs and its members were not allowed to enter the mosques. On the day of Id-ul-Azha, when they went to offer Nimaz in the Aali Masjid Srinagar,

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91. The official records of the Anjuman show that it came into existence in the year 1923. See Alk ul yat-i-Salafiya, Jamiat-i-Ahl Hadith, p.11.

92. The founding members of the Anjuman were Haji Mohammad Shahdad, Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Abdul Aziz Chiken, Ghulam Shah Naqeeb and a few others. See Jamiat-i-Ahl-i-Hadith, Jammu-wa-Kashmir, op.cit., p.5, Haji Mohammad Shahdad, Fatah-i-Ahal-i-Hadith, 1344 H, (1926 A.D.) Anjuman-i-Ahl-i-Hadith, Srinagar.

93. Sofi Ahmad Muslim, op.cit. p.326.

94. Moulavi Ghulam Nabi Mubariki, Moezat-ul-Fathia, p.7.

95. Moulavi Anwar Shah, Basharat-u - Mumineen, pp.6, 10, 20, 23 and 24.

they were forcibly driven out of the mosque and were not allowed to offer their prays there.[96] The Government also took the side of Hanafis and arrested some of the leaders of Ahl-i-Hadith, while others were beaten up. It is relevant to point out here that the British Government of India had issued special orders warning the Dogra Government of Kashmir, to keep an eye over the activities of the Anjuman and its members.[97]

In spite of opposition from Mullas and Muftis, the leaders made progress in their mission, and they succeeded in carrying forward their activities. They filed a case against the decisions of Mullahs and Muftis, who denied them the right to enter the mosques of Hanafis. After a prolonged discussion, the course of law decided in favour of them and they were allowed to offer their prayers in the mosques held by the Sunnis.[98] The proper

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96. Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Jammu wa Kashmir, Ahl-i-Hadith Conference, p.3 See also Mir Waiz Ahmad-ullah, Ahl-i-Hadith ke Nisbet, 1921, Srinagar, pp.1-2.
Muslim, April 2, 1360 H, p.18; Ahl-i-Hadith ke Nisbat, pp.1-2.

97. Muslim, April 2, 1360,H; p.18; Ahl-i-Hadith ke Nisbat, pp.1-2.

98. Moulavi Mubarki organised the Anjuman-i-Ahl-Hadith on proper footing, See Ghulam Nabi Mubariki, Moeczat-ul Fathias, op.cit. p.7.
Muslim, Mohrram 1360 H, pp.18, 20;
Haji Mohammad Shahdad, Fatah-i-Ah-i-Hadith, op.cit. pp.23-24, Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Faisalah-Ahl-i-Hadith, 1926, Srinagar, pp.15-16.

and favourable decision of the court of law encouraged the Ahl-i-Hadith leaders to preach freely and courageously against the peer mureedi system and tomb worship.[99] Moulavi Anwar Shah declared that the less knowledgable Pirs and Muftis were the real enemies of Islam.[100] He declared from the Pulpit in the Zaldagar mosque that they had led the people astray and that they had religious background. With their efforts some of the families accepted this purified form of Islam.[101]

It was till 1940 that the movement went on very well but, unfortunately, because of some differences on religious issues, the movement was bifurcated into two groups, namely, Bazam-i-Tauhid and Anjuman-i-Gurba-i-

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99. History of Srinagar, op.cit, 105.

100. History of Srinagar, op.cit, p.108.

101. Sofi Ahmad Muslim, op.cit, pp. 108-110. The Ahl-i-Hadith leaders of Kashmir not only received religious education but financial assistance too. See Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Jammu-wa-Kashmir Ahl-i-Hadith Conference, p.30.

Ahl-i-Hadith.[102] The latter was founded by Moulana Anwar Shah. Mohammad Abdullah Ahangar was made its first President.[103] It kept the individuality, while the Bazam-i-Tauhid led by Moulavi Mubarki marched with the times.[104] It was because of this reason that it was much more popular that the group led by Moulana Anwar Shah, among the people. This group also published its own paper entitled Muslim in 1940.[105] Moulavi Mubarki had also started a weekly, called Tahid . But because of financial crisis its publication was stopped.[106]

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102. An issue was raised by Moulvi Anwar Shah at Zaldagar, Mosque, that Friday prayer be offered between 11 a.m. and 12 noon. But Moulvi Mubariki did not agree the assertion of Moulavi Anwar Shah. And there was no agreement between the two leaders. They sought the help of Moulana Sonaullah Amritsari and Moulana Ibrahim Sialkoti, the two leading leaders of Punjab. Both the two leaders supported the claim of Moulvi Mubarki. But Moulana Anwar Shah, continued to lay stress on his point, this led the bifurcation of the movement into two groups one led by Moulana Anwar Shah and the second by Moulvi Mubarki, See. Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Tahqeek-Waqt -Juma, 1945, Anjuman-i-Ahl-i-Hadith, Srinagar, p.11.

103. Sofi Ahmad Muslim, op.cit., p.210.

104. Muslim Jameed-ul-Saani, 1359, H. p.2; Muslim Ziqad, 1359 H., p.13.

105. Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Moezat-ul-Fatahi, pp.6-8.

106. Sofi Ahmad Muslim, op. cit., P. 216.

Moulvi Anwar Shah's death in 1940 gave a setback to the movement.[107] He was succeeded by his son Abdul Ghani Shopiani,[108] who was declared the rightful heir to the Zaldagar mosque. He from the platform of the Zaldagar mosque, severely critised the Pirs and Mullas and held them responsible for all social evils prevalent in the Muslim society.[109] He undertook many tours to propagate his ideas in order to purify Islam.[110]

In Anantnag district, the credit for propagating the tenets of Ahl-i-Hadith goes to Abdul Kabir Deva. It was due to his efforts that the movement spread in some of the villages of Anantnag.[111] His father and his brothers also played their role in the propagation of the tenets of Ahl-i-Hadith.[112] The people of Anantnag, especially the Hanafis, while finding their activities as

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107. Muslim, Jammud-ul-Awal, 1360 H, p.6; Shaban; 1359, p.2: Mohammad Ayub Betab, op.cit., p.15.

108. Moulvi Abdul Ghani had studied from the important Ahl-i-Hadith leaders of Punjab like, Abdul Minan Wazirhadi, Abdul Aziz Rahimabadi and Uba-i-Dullah Siyalkoti, See. Abdul Aziz, Bidat Rasoom, Sai Ijtinab; p.44.

109. Moulvi Abdul Ghani, Rat-bul-Jani, 1365 H, Klifton Press, Srinagar, p.65.

110. Abdul Aziz, op.cit, p.44, Mohammad Ayub Betab, op.cit. p.44.

111. Muslim, November 16, 1946, pp.9-11, Sofi Ahmad Muslim, op.cit., pp.120-124.

112. Ibid. The role of Deva family - the spread of Ahl-i-Hadith tenents in Anantnag is very important.

an insult to their ideologies, filed a case against the three brothers of the Deva family. But later on it was dismissed on the ground that the charges levelled against them had got no base at all.[113] Then again in 1940, they were seen in court of law dragging each other when the mosque of Islamabad was seized from the Ahl-i-Hadith, after the court gave its decision in favour of the Hanafis.[114] So members of Ahl-i-Hadith had to offer their prayers in a private house for some time. But later on, they constructed a new mosque for themselves.[115]

Religious ideology

Members of Ahl-i-Hadith are not a separate sect among the Muslims but they are sunnis and confine themselves to the text of the Quran and Hadith. They believe in Tauhid, i.e. oneness of God and at the same time, they also reject Pir worship, tomb worship and all other un-Islamic practices and superstitions.[116] They believe that the Muslims have the right to interpret the Quran themselves. This right according to them was given to them by the followers of the great imam Abu-Hanifa. Therefore, they advocate that this right should be put into practice.[117]

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113. Ibid., p.120.

114. Muslim, November 2, 1942, p.8.

115. Muslim, July 1945, p.3.

116. Moulana Anwar Shah, Diwan-i-Anwari, 1350,H, Anjuman-i-Gurba-i-Ahl-Hadith, Zaldagar, pp.29-30. Usul-i-Hadith, Anjuman Gurba-i-Hadith, Brocas Press, Srinagar.

117. Muslim, October 2, 1941, December, 1941, p.11. November, 1945, p.11.

Ahl-i-Hadith did not believe in visiting shrines and tombs or in seeking help of saints in times of trouble. At the same time, they also rejected the practice of Wasalat (mediation) on some one's behalf. They believed that Wasalat was permissible only in two ways - one by worship of God directly, and the other by acting on Hadith.[118] However, they respected saints like Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani and Sayyid Ali Hamadani.[119]

Ahl-i-Hadith believed in the theory of Shafaat. But it could be effected onlyby persons, who were Muwahid (who believe in Tauhid). They believed that the real intercessor on the Day of Judgement would be Prophet Mohammad (P.b.u.u.h).[120] They considered Ziyarat Kaboor (visiting the graveyards) as Sunnat (permitted by Shariat). They believed that visits to graveyards makes

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118. Moulvi Abdul Giani, Tuhfat-ul-Hijaz, 1367 H, Anjuman-i-Gurba-i-Ahl-i-Hadith, Zaldagar, pp.32-33.

119. Ahl-i-Hadith regarded them as the true followers of the prophetic tradition. Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Muqaam-i-Tasawat Noor Mohammadi Press, Srinagar, pp.16-17, Abdul Gani, Tuhfat-u-Hijaz, pp.26-27.

120. Moulvi Anwar Shah, Basharat -ul-Munineen, pp.59-60.

to person to understand the meaning of real life.[121] Ahl-i-Hadith, were also opposed to some of the extravagant ceremonies connected with the death of a person. For example, Jume-Chae, fixing a polished stone on the grave of the deceased, visiting of graveyards by the members of the bereaved family, is un-Islamic. They also did not believe in the observation of Khatam-i-Sharif.[122]

The celebration of urses like, urs-i-Shah-i-Hamadan, urs-i-Batmalloo, urs-i-Pir-i-Dustagir, urs-i-Hazratbal, urs-i-Char-i-Sharief, are looked upon by Ahl-i-Hadith with disgust. They also opposed the celebration of urs-i-Nabi. They did not favour the tying of tab at a shrine. This practice was declared as polytheistic.[123]

Ahl-i-Hadith declared that the story connected with Moie-i-Sharif was a fabrication.[124] They would say

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121. Moulvi Anwar Shah, Talim-i-Sunnat, Part III (3 vols), 1358 H, Anjuman-i-Guba-i-Ahl-Hadith, Srinagar, p.37, Ahl-i-Hadith are against the plantation of flowers in the graveyards as they regard it as a Jewish practice. Moulvi Anwar Shah, Diwan Anwari, 1350,H, Anjuman-i-Gurba-i-Ahl-i-Hadith, Zaldagar, p.14.

122. Moulvi Nur-ud-Din, Masjidoo Mai Shorgul Kyoon, 1387, H.1. Oriental College,Srinagar, p.30.

123. History of Srinagar, p.102; Moulvi Nur-ud-Din, op.cit. p.31-32, it is called Dassh in Kashmiri, See. History of Srinagar, p.107.

124. Moulvi Abdul Ghani, Fatah-ul-Tawab, 1359 H, Pratab Steam Press, Srinagar, p.3.

that the holy hair of Prophet Mohammad,(p.b.u.h) had no religious background. But the story was invented only to deceive the ignorant masses. Among the Ahl-i-Hadith leaders who disapproved of the claims of authenticity of Moie-i-Sharif, mayxx be mentiored the name of Moulvi Abdul Ghani and Moulvi Mohi-ud-Din Gaan.[125]

The Ahl-i-Hadith did not believe in religious charlatans. They held them responsible for several social evils, which had crept into Islam. However, they believed in Naufal, tracing its origin to the Hadith; whenever there was a draught, Prophet Mohammad used to offer Nimaz-i-Istiqamat.[126] Ahl-i-Hadith of Srinagar proceeded to Idgah to offer congregational prayers, but were opposed to carrying of emblems and holy relics of saints on such occasions.[127]

The Ahl-i-Hadith did not believe in the physical existence of Prophet Mohammad (P.b.u.h). They criticised those Muslims who believed in the physical existence of Prophet Mohammad (P.u.b.h.). They believed in the spiritual existence of the great prophet because

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125. Ibid, pp.3-5.

126. Moulvi Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Muqa-am-i-Tasalf, pp.21,23, 36, Sofi Ghulam Ahmad, Namaz-i-Muslim, Muslim, pp.95-96.

127. Muslim , July 1941, p.3, Jameed-ul-Saani, 1941, p.20, History of Srinagar, p.108.

the spiritual existence of the Prophet (P.u.b.h.) is approved by the Quran and Hadith.[128]

Ahl-i-Hadith also laid stress on the fact that Khutba be read in the language of the people instead of Arabic language, so that people could understand its meaning. In our valley, we find that in Ahl-i-Hadith mosques, Khutba is read in Kashmiri. But Hanafis opposed them on this issue. They regard the reading of Khutba in a language other than Arabic as an un-Islamic.[129]

Role of Ahl-i-Hadith in the field of education

Ahl-i-Hadith not only contributed in the religious sphere only, but they also contributed towards the growth and spread of education among the masses. They had realised the importance of education which could liberate the people from the morass of ignorance and degradation. Education they held, was a weapon, with which

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128. Haji Mohammad Shahdad, Fatah-i-Ahl-i-Hadith, p.11, All the muslims of the valley other than the Ahl-i-Hadith, generally believed in the physical existence of prophet Mohammad (P.b.u.h). But Mir Waiz Ahmad Ullah, a follower of Abu Hanfia also supported this idea of Ahl-i-Hadith.

129. Muslim, Ramzan, 1359 H; P.11. Shawal, 1359, H, p.11.

masses could be modernised. Education widened one's mind and freed it from evil and superstitious ideas. Prophet Mohammad rightly said that "the seeker of knowledge will be greeted in Heaven with a welcome from the Angels.[130]

The Ahl-i-Hadith started schools for providing religious education to the people. It must be mentioned that previously there had existed such centres, where religious education was provided to the masses, and these centres were run and headed by the Moulvis. They taught the people to recite the Quran,[131] without making them understand its meaning. It was because of this reason that Muslims had remained ignorant of the Quran and Hadith. For this ignorance, Moulvis must be blamed because it was these who for their own vested interests had kept the people unaware of real Islam.[132]

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130. Amir Ali, The Spirit of Islam, London, 1922, p.360.

131. They did not exercise any moral inference on the people, they taught them that Islam as understood by them. History of Srinagar, p.124.

132. Daughters of the Vitaste, (P.242. Moulvis did not allow muslims to receive education imparted by the Christian missionaries. They tried their best to keep the Muslims away from the modern education. They never wanted Muslims to get changed.

The Anjuman Ahl-i-Hadith opened up schools where the Quran was taught with its meaning in Kashmiri language.[133] It will not be out of place to mention here that it was because of the reason, Ahl-i-Hadith laid stress on the Khutba be read in the Kashmiri language.[134] By 1931, the Ahl-i-Hadith had established only one centre where the Quran was taught with its meaning.[135] But as the time rolled on it established some more schools in some parts of the valley; mention may be made of the High School at Chota Bazar, Srinagar, Primary School of Chanapora, Srinagar, Middle School of Shopian, Middle School of Yaripora,Shopian, Middle School of Kandaroo, Badgam, Middle School of Kangan, Primary School, Rasoowadawan Primary School Sopore,Bazam-i-Tahid[136] also opened primary schools at Hawal,Srinagar,Shangas, Kulgam and Badgam.

These schools provided education to both boys and girls strictly on Islamic lines, besides the Quran and Hadith. They taught history,geography and sciences.[137] The

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133. Census of India, 1931, Vol.XXIV,Jammu & Kashmir, Part I, p.298.

134. Ibid.

135. Census of India, 1931, Vol.XXII, p.298.

136. Official Report of Bazam-i-Tauhid, File No.7.

137. Moulvi Nur-ud-Din, Dustoor-i-Asasi, pp.3-5.

most famous School of the Anjuman, which was set up on Deoband pattern is Alkulyat-i-Salafiya, situated at Gowkadal,Srinagar.[138] This school imparted free education to the students and also provided for free boarding and lodging.[139] It also distributed free literature among the students and the people.[140]

No doubt that the Ahl-i-Hadith Movement made strong efforts to reform the society, but it did not achieve much success, because only a few families were converged to this movement. Even now people still believe in saint worship, tomb-worship and other irreligious practices, Yet the movement succeeded in attacking many social evils prevalent them. At the same time, it taught people to be rational. The movement made people believe only in those things which are approved by the Quran and the Hadith.

The schools run by the Anjuman-i-Ahl-i-Hadith imparted modern and religious education to the students and the Quran was taught in depth in Kashmiri language. This made Islam easy to understand and helped to arouse consciousness among the Muslims, though less in number.

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138. Jamiat-Ahl-i-Hadith, Alkuliyat-i-Salafiya, p.7.

139. Moulvi Nur-ud-Din, Dustoor-i-Asasi, pp.3-4.

140. Ibid.

C H A P T E R - VI

SOCIAL PROTESTS

SOCIAL PROTESTS

Protests are accepted instruments of ventilating the grievances on the part of the frustrated groups or individuals against the authorities. They are, in fact, effective instruments of expressing grievances so as to bring pressure upon the Government or authorities to respond to the public. Social protests do try to attempt to bring about a change in certain social institutions or to create an entirely new order. Protests occur in every society and tend to affect directly or indirectly, the social order. Whatever change the world has witnessed in social or any other sphere has been due to the result of social movement or social protests. Protests are usually the expression of dis-satisfaction against injustice, social, political and economic. This fact is borne out by Indian experience as well as the State experiences (J&K State). In both these cases freedom struggles were the outcome of various locally organised protest movements.[1]

In order to understand the phenomenon of protest, it is desirable to define the term first. The term "Protest" means "to speaks strongly against or to express disapproval". It also means "an expression of

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1. Protest Movements and Democratic Culture, Ph.D.Thesis, submitted by Asifa Jan to the University of Kashmir, pp.1-4.

declaration of objection, disapproval or dissent,often in opposition to something a person is powerless to prevent or avoid". Protests are primarily a collective action which registers dis-satisfaction with performance of power elite in a political system. They may strive for political and social change too. In modern democracies protests have been recognised as "legitimate and institutionalised form of political behaviour". But so far as our period of research is concerned, protests were considered a "sin and crime" and those who indulged in protests were punished and fined and even put to death.

In pre-modern societies, protests were variously described such as millenarian, chiliastic or messianic movements. Most of the protest ideologies were religious and a few, due to the social disturbances, were social disturbances. But in the modern times, protests have become explicit, with the definite ideology which "compound the interpretive problem in many ways for, it becomes deceptively easy to assume that actual protests Lure caused by what ideologists said,it was caused by and intended what said it intended".[2]

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2. David B.Guralnix (Chief ed.): Webster New World Dictionary, (New York,Oxford and I.B.H.Publishing Co. P.599.

Norman P.Cantor. The Age of Protest,(London,George Allen and Unwin,1970,P.XIV.
T.K.Ormen,Protest and Changes:Studies in Social Movements. (New Delhi,Sage Publication 1990),P.11.

Philip P.Weiner,Dictionary of History of ideas, Vol.III,New York,Charles,Scribers Sons,1973),P.72.

Actually, the atrocities of Kashmiris started right from its annexation with the Mughals. They ruled the valley through the governors, who were very harsh and fought among themselves. They imposed illegal taxes, one of the Naib Subedar of Muhammad Shah's reign, Agar Khan imposed tax on elephants which were no where in Kashmir. This is remembered and recorded by folk saying of Kashmir, as "Agar Khanum Hous" and points to illegal exactions imposed by the tyrrainical government of Mughal rule. After the Mughals Afghans ruled for 67 years and reduced the people to the lowest ebb of penury and degradation. They were followed by the Sikhs, who ruled from 1819 to 1846. They too, like their predecessors, were harsh and exacted as much as they could and reduced the people to a condition of mere slaves. The institution of Begar and floods and famines also played their role towards the devastating conditions of the people of Kashmir.[3]

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3. P.N.K.Bamzai, A History of Kashmir:Political,Social and Cultural from the Earliest Times to the Present Day, Delhi,1962, PP.394-410, J.H.Knovles, Dictionary of Kashmir Proverbs and Sayings, The people of land are fortunats enough to have a rich folk literature, which provides a meaning presentation of socio-economic and political conditions of its people, experienced by them through the dark and gloomy days of their long history. The folk literature depict the miseries and sufferings, the cruelties and barbarities perpetuated upon them by their non local supporters and collaborators. It has depicted the administrative drawbacks in the different regimes and also the reaction of people as well. People used it as a weapon to protest against the political oppression and social injustice. Social Protests as reflected in the folk-lore of Kashmir, M.Phil.thesis,submitted by Farooq Ahmad Bhat to the University of Kashmir.

The Shawl Bauf Protest of 1865

The year 1846 was the most unfortunate year in the history of Kashmir because it was during this year that Kashmir alongwith its people were sold to a Raja of Jammu, Mian Gulab Singh, who later came to be known as the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir. British imperialists not only forced an autocratic ruler on the people of the land, but also supported him militarily. From then onwards, the miseries and misfortunes of the people grew from bed to worse. The autocratic way in which the Dogras ruled the valley, reduced the people to the lowest ebb of penury and degradation. Their high taxation, increased prices, the shutting up of grain Kothas, the mis-management and oppression of the Dagh-Shawl etc., were some of the examples of their autocratic and oppressive rule.[4]

Particular Property of Kashmir: The Kashmiri Shawl

The shoulder mantle or shawl had been in existance, in a variety of forms, from the most ancient times, serving as a stapic and protective garment, not for the rich and noble, but also and above all for their people. In ancient Buddhist literature the Shawl can be found among recorded inventories of woolen Textiles, and its mamufacture appears to have been a cottage industry in

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4. F.M.Hussnain, Article, Published in Sheeraza, Threads of Life the Shawl Bauf Agitation of 1865, P.28.

Kashmir as early as eleventh century.[5] During the previous times, Kashmir was famous in India and abroad due to its arts and crafts, its shawls and pashmina.The name of Kashmir has become synonymous with shawls and foreign shawls have never equalled them in delicate softness,fine web and elegance.[6]

It has been claimed that the shawls of Kashmir had attained much fame in Europe during medieval times. It has been claimed that the veil fastened by a thin golden thread ever the forehead of Leonards de vinci's world famous Monafisa, is a Kashmir shawl. The Mughal Emperors also patronised it and by their attention this industry flourished greatly. Akbar, the Mughal Emperor, who subjugated Kashmir by subterfuge, ordered the nobles to wear Kashmiri shawls, when presenting themselves before the royal courts.[7]

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5. Ames Frank, The Kashmir Shawl and its Indo-French-Influence. England, 1986, P.17.

6. Ibid, Robert Throp, Kashmir Mis-Government, PP.40-41.

   G.M.D.Sufi, Kashir, Being a History of Kashmir from the Earliest Times to our own, Lahore, 1948. The author cites from an anonymous report dated 1820; 'A rich banker,Shoogun Chand,of respectable establishment and treasurer to the residency, has within two years made up several shawls under his own supervision.Getting material and workmen from Cashmire, but these expenses are much beyond the Saleable value of the manufacturers not is it equal in any respect to the kind of the article made at Cashmerei. The colour is particularly defective

7. Op.Cit., Shiraza, P.29.

Jehangir also writes about the shawls of Kashmir to which my father gave the name 'Param-naram" are very famous, there is no need to praise them.[8]

Sir Thomas Roe, James I's ambassador to the Mughal Court, was offered a gold shawl by the Governor of Surat in 1616. Decorative shawls such as these were apparently used as enticing bribes and this is mentioned in the early records of the East India trading Company.[9]

Francois Bernier, the celebrated doctor,philosopher and travellor, spent twelve years in India as Physician to Aurangzeb. He had the privilege of visiting Kashmir, while accompanying Aurangzeb and thus being the first Westerner ever to set foot in the 'enchanted land', Large quantities of shawls were manufactured which gave employment even to children. He wrote, 'these shawls measured five by two and a half feet, were ornamented at both ends with a sort of embroidery made in the loom, a foot in height. The Mughals and the Indians were them

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and this, it is said a particularly property of Cashmere itself. So article washed even in its neighbourhood attains to the same superior perfection in this respect. Ranfit Singh tried similarly to manufacture shawls at Lahoore, but failed just as Shoogun Chand did.

8. Op.cit., Ames Frank, P.21.

9. Ibid., P.22.

in winter around their heads, passing them over the shoulders as a mantle. One sort of such shawls was manufactured with the wool of country and the other with the wool of the shawl goat of Tibet. The price of the Tus shawl ranged from 50 to 150 rupees. Great pains were taken to manufacture similar shawls at Patna, Agra and Lahore, but they lacked the delicate texture of Kashmir shawls.[10]

Certain travel accounts relate that the shawls of Kashmir become famous during the period of Napoleon, when the French scholars brought some shawls from Egypt. The author of the standard work of Kashmir and the shawls cites that 'the first shawls which reached Europe were brought by Napoleon at the time of the compaign in Egypt, as a present to the Empress Josophine, and from that time, the shawls became fashionable'.

In spite of the fact that the shawl industry experienced many vicissitudes, it yet proved a constant source of much income and revenue for the rulers, as well as for the Kharkhandars of Kashmir.[11] The following details, about the export of Kashmir shawls, outside India,

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10. Ibid., P.23.

11. Op.cit. Sheerza, P.29.

explains the importance of shawl industry:-

1851	- 171,709	1858	- 227,618
1852	- 146,270	1859	- 310,027
1853	- 215,659	1860	- 252,828
1854	- 170,153	1861	- 351,093
1854	- 192,890	1862	- 459,441
1856	- 209,279	1863	- 303,157
1857	- 290,640	1864	- 275,391
		1865	- 254,498[12]

It is an established fact of history that the rich has always lived by exploiting the poor, and this exploitation has continued and is continuing at present. A big fish eats up the small fish, in the same was the captilists have been robbing the workers on the basis of materialistic system. Exploitation rests on this very principle. The rulers and their officials loved money and they took to extortion to gain it, and this was the root cause of all tyranny and cruelty in Kashmir.[13]

Oppression and atrocities done by the rulers

The condition of the workmen and the artisans in towns and the Srinagar city alike was most miserable.

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12. Op.cit., Robert Thropp, P.29.

13. Robert Thropp, Op.cit, P.29.
Sheeraza, Op.cit., P.30.

The condition of shawl weavers in the city was not good during the Sikh rule (1849-1846). The artisans could not maintained their families during those unhappy years. The wages of the weavers were very mean and low.[14] The family of a shawl weaver lived in acute poverty. A weaver's son at the age of five years started his living and "thus another human being enters on a career of wretchedness and rears children, who in turn become heirs of his misery.[15] The artisans, weavers, shawl baufs and other skilled sections of the Kashmiri society were subjected to the highest degree of social injustice and exploitation. Not to speak of the Dogras, Kashmiris were in fact exploited right from the time Kashmir was annexed by the Mughals. The Kashmiri folk saying "Agar Khanon Nous" speak of illegal exactions imposed on the common masses by the Mughal governors. At the same time "Mughal Pather" also highlights the chaotic fabric of mughal administration.[16]

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14. Baran Schonberg, Travels in India and Kashmir, Vol.II, P.103.

15. Ibid.

16. G.N.Aatish and M.L.Anash, Kashmir Talmihaat, J.N.Knowles, A Dictionary of Kashmir Proverbs and Sayings.

P.N.K.Bamzai, in Mohamad Shah's Time 'Agar Khan', was sent as a Naib Subedar to Kashmir, he asked Kashmiris to pay an elephant tax, which was no where in the valley, one of the Kashmiris argued that there was not elephant in the valley, so it was unjust to impose this very tax. This argument may be taken as a protest, and the same tax was collected from the ignorant Kashmiris.

Actually, the trade and business of Kashmir received its first serious blow with the arrival of the Afghans in the valley. The harsh taxation policy adopted by the Afghans caused a great set-back to the economy of the country.[17] Similarly, the shawl trade and industry, which was at one time the pride and honour of Kashmir, suffered enormously at the hands of the Afghans. As per the records, they collected forty lakh rupees annually by way of taxes from the shawl trade alone.[18] The institution of Daag-shawl, a very unique of its kind, gave a terrible blow to the shawl industry.[19] The Afghans were unsparing in looting and plundering the valley. They never cared for the poor Kashmiris. The following verse depicts the pathetic condition of the Afghan rule in the valley:

پرسیدم از خزانے زِ گلشن باغبان
افغان کہ شد گفت کہ افغان خراب کرد

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17. Parmu, R.K. History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir, P.102.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

The condition of workmen and artisans in the towns and Srinagar alike was most miserable. The shawl weavers' condition also showed a worse picture during the Sikh times (1819-1846). The artisans could not maintain their families during these unhappy years. The wages of the weavers were very low.[20] The family of a shawl weaver lived in acute poverty.[21] The condition of labour class did not show any sign of improvement. It rather went from bad to worse. The distress and misery experienced by the people, coupled with natural calamities are remindscent of very tough times. The Kashmiri folk saying "Sher Singhin Draag" has been a testimony to the fact that the rulers showed utter negligence in mitigating the distress of the people caused by the floods, drought and famine. In the time of Sher Singh (1831-1834) the trade received a severe blow.[22] It was Mahan Singh, who did a lot to rehabilitate the trade and industries of

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20. Baron Schonberg, Travels in India and Kashmir, Vol.II, P.103.

    The wages of each weaver were 4 annas of which he paid two annas to Sikh governor of Kashmir.

21. Ibid.

22. Sher Singh was son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.He exorted as much money as he could from the traders and Kardars without assigning any reason.

Kashmir.[23] The close contact of Kashmir with Punjab had brought economic life line to the common man, but the famines, floods, epedemics and apathetic attitudes of governors became an obstacle in the path of economic progress.[24]

The change of political power from the Sikhs to Dogras did not bring any relief to the distressed Kashmiris, but it became usual practice with Kashmiris to leave the valley in search of labour during the period of natural calamities to earn their sustenance and simultaneously to escape from the heavy exactions. Many kinds of taxes were imposed on shawl weavers with the result that a good number of them left the valley.[25] An annual tax imposed on each shawl weaver was 47-81 rupees. The abject condition of shawl weavers further worsened owing to heavy official demand.

The most unfortunate thing for the shawl weavers was that they could not change the profession, because it was almost impossible to get a substitute. They had

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23. Nursing Das Nargis, Tarikh-i-Dogra Desh, P.630. Our folk literature also throws light on the condition of people during the natural calamities. For example Sahlab Dams, Buniyalnams, Mujwasa-nama, Beboojnama and other poetic compositions provide a clear picture of masses' abject condition and misery.

24. Ibid. Raj & Nazranana were some of the impositions, imposed upon the poor shawl-weavers.

25. Robert Thropp, Op.cit., P.64.

to continue their adopted profession, which was generally hereditary in character, where the son succeeded the father in his profession. The dirty surroundings which sheltered the poor artisans badly affected their health conditions. Their were miserable and it was sad to contrast the beauty of the art work with the ugliness of the worker's life.[26] A massive class of artisans were badly paid, badly nourished and badly housed and therefore they were physically and morally wretched.[27] Though the shawl industry was a major source of income for the Government, little efforts were made to improve the working condition of the labour class. On the contrary, the artisans were subjected to indiscriminate treatment, which resulted in their starvation. The Franco-German War in 1870 closed for ever the doors of their fortune, and the famine of 1877-79 gave an irreperable blow to the dying industry from which it never revived again. There occurred a number of cases when people started dying of starvation. There was no option but to run away to

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26. Ibid, P.64, Op.cit, Sheeraza, PP.30-31, W.R.Lawrence, The Valley of Kashmir, P.374, Nothing but death can release them from the bondage. Since the discharge of a shawl-bauf would reduce the Dogra Maharaja's revenue by 36 chilqees a year, deaths, suicide or flight were the only doors of release open to heavy laden shawl-baufs.

27. Sir Richard Temple. Journals kept in Hyderabad, Kashmir, Sir Rim and Nepal, Vol.II, P.276.

distant lands. The state government time and again was urged by the Punjab Government to take necessary steps to relieve the distressed artisans from pain. Hence large quantities of foodgrains were imported for the distribution of the city people. But nothing was done for the rural people. Distressed news began to be published in many newspapers in India about the famine conditions prevailing in the valley. It was reported that atrocities had been committed by the Dogra officials on the staring people. The State Government took steps to suppress adverse news. Har Gopal, a pleader, informed the British Government that in order to stop the Kashmiri migration nearly one hundred famine - stricken people were drowned in the Wular lake. Fredrick Henry Cooper came to Srinagar to enquire into these allegations. Even the Lord Bishop of Calcutta visited Kashmir to find out the truth about starvation deaths.[28]

The worst sufferers were the shawl workers. Arthur Brinckman has summed up the conditions of a Kashmiri worker as below:[29] "To see the oppression is easy enough to prove each act and to trace it to its source is harder. But this I tried to do and I proved that oppression

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28. P.N.Hasnain, British Policy towards Kashmir, Sahibzada, Hassan Shah, Tarikh-i-Kashmir, P.98.

29. Arthur Brinckman, The Wrongs of Kashmir, P.35.

exists for than any one dream of that I have yet met with them. The people may seen to work away quietly, many of them may be happy, never known a better lot; the ordinary traveller might not see the oppression through hearing of it. A gang of convicts seen uncomplaining enough at work, which considering how they are fed and cared for, is not surprising. But, alas, Kashmiris are treated just like, so many convicts, work for their own benefit. They set to work quietly and with no pleasure, like the above mentioned convicts. It is all sowing for themselves to reap and carry to the barns of the hated government and race." The worst piece of oppression against the shawl weavers was that they could not leave their profession with out finding substitute, which was almost very impossible to find out.[30]

Oppression and atrocities done by the department of Daagh-Shawl.

There was a large department office, called the Daagh Shawl, in which two hundred Pandits were employed for the purchase of shawls. There was a head official, who was called the Darogha of Daagh-Shawl. Before a loom

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30. Robert Thropp, Op.Cit., P.52.

shawl was legally made its fineness was checked by the Daagh-Shawl Department at a small piece of shawl. The proposed size was named and the price was thus calculated, piece then received with the government stamp and was laid up in the Daagh Shawl. The Karkhandar received a paper describing the shawl and giving the date of the stamp, for which he paid at the time 18.12 per cent on the price of the shawl. When the shawl was completed, it was taken to the Daagh-Shawl and the stamped piece was worked into it. No loom shawl could be sold without first obtaining this seal of the Daagh-Shawl department.[31] Some of the Pandits were employed to check the working of the Karkhand, situated at villages and town of the valley.[32]

These Pandits of Daagh-Shawl department demanded and received illegal remuneration from the Karkhandars are boat-hire, road expenses, etc. Their visits to these Karkhanas were very frequent, so these remunerations amounted to a considerable sum. At the end of the year, the amount paid into the Daagh-Shawl by each Karkhandar was calculated by the officials and compared with the amount he would have paid, and had the tax of Rs. 47.8 per shawl bauf been taken from him instead.

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31. CF. Ibid, PP.43-44.

32. Ibid.

The deficiency was then paid by the Karkhandar. It rarely or never happened that he paid percentage in excess, because he entertained a doubt that in the event of having done. So, the difference would not have been refunded to him by the Darogha. He restricted himself, therefore, to the making of such number of shawls that the tax upon which would not exceed the amount of the original import of Rs. 47.8 per shawl bauf annually. But such an arrangement was beneficial to the interests of officials only and it was detrimental to the shawl baufs.[33]

It was in the year 1847 that the shawl-weavers organised themselves and revolted against the tyranny and exploitation. They struck work and about 4000 fled the valley. Maharaja Gulab Singh assured them that the complaints would be heard. It was in July 1847[34] that the Maharaja enquired into their case and fixed their

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33. Ibid, CF, P.44
The Kashmiri proverb Naman Myetch Te Kaman Kith bears testomony to fact, that the benefit of the work done by the Kashmiris was harvested by the officials of the Dogra Movement. Same happened to the shawl-weavers, who worked very hard for their subsistance, but the benefit went to the officials, who looted and plundered the shawl-weavers and made them mere serfs or slaves.

34. K.M.Panikar, The Founding of the Kashmir State, 1930, P.139.

wages and abolished the tax which was imposed on the finished articles.[35] He also promulgated a new law which did not make it necessary for apprentices (Shagirds) to work for the same master. Thus the Shagirds became free and no longer remained serfs under their masters. Although the Maharaja passed and promulgated some laws, the condition of the workman remained the same as before.

During Ranbir Singh's times, the social condition was not appelling, Wilson remarked that the wages of the shawl weavers were miserable, weavers were like slaves. They could neither leave the valley, nor change their employment.[36] Sir Nichard Temple, another visitor, wrote that the weavers formed "a numerous and withal a miserable class, badly paid, badly nourished and badly housed and therefore physically and morally wretched.[37] Dr. Klmslie, who had closely studied the social conditions of the weavers, had remarked that, "they were the most miserable portion of the population both physically and morally, crowded together in small and badly ventilated workshops, earning a mere pittance and insufficiently

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35. Ibid.

36. Wilson Andrew, The aboide of snow. P.398.

37. Sir Richard Temple, Journals, Vol.I.,P.276.

nourished, they suffered from chest infection, rhoumatism and scrofula.[38]

Sale of Rice

For many centuries, there had existed a unique practice of procuring foodgrains, particularly rice, from villages and storing them for city people in the capital city of Srinagar. But during the Dogra period, the Maharaja paroled Kashmir out into a hundred odd tracts and distributed it among his stooges. It was strange that Kashmiri tillers, for the first time, were deprived of their homes and hearths. Rice was procured by the Maharaja's government and distributed to the Shawl-bouf and Sada-bauf workers, through the agency of Daagh Shawl. This clearly shows that the shawl baufs were like the bonded slaves of the Maharaja.[39] They had to weave in order to eat. Their families rested in the hands of the officers of the Maharaja. They were treated like hostages to whom the rice was sold by the Maharaja's Officers at whatever rates they liked.

There was an endless corruption and confusion in such an arrangement of distribution of rice. The artisans

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38. Bates. Gazettes of Kashmir etc, Calcutta, 1962, P.33.

39. Sheeraza, Op.Cit., P.31, Ames Frank, Op.Cit, P.

position was like that of a hostage or a slave in lieu of food. This system of distribution of rice reduced him to the state of semi-starvation and, sometimes, to hunger.[40]

Starving conditions

When people started dying of starvation, they had no option but to run away from the valley to the far-off plains of Punjab. The Governor of Punjab urged the Maharaja to take necessary action. Rice was imported for distribution among the city people. But nothing was done for the villagers. Distressing news was published in many newspapers in India about the famine conditions prevailing in the valley.[41] The created mass discontentment in the valley as the state authorities could not import sufficient quantities of rice. The

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40. The whole system was explained by Robert Thropp as under, 'On the arrival of grain in Srinagar, a large amount is set-aside for the shawl-baufs and portions of it are, from time to time made over to Darogha for them when that official receives an order for so much sale from the Governor be taken his accounts. Then he writes orders for each of Karkhandar entitling them to receive so much rice, according to the number of men in their employ. From certain, specified boats, The Karkhandar, on receipt of the order, sends for the boat or boats named and distributes rice to his shawl_baufs, keeping an account of the account delivered to each to be deducted from his monthly wages, the Karkhandar being himself charged with the total cost of the rice in his account with the Darogha. Robert Thropp, PP. 49-50.

41. It was claimed that the Dogras took steps to suppress the news.

shawl-weavers were the worst hit. The people had no other alternative but to migrate to the plains of Punjab or to die of starvation which defamed the state Government and led to intervention of the British authorities. The State Government had to seal the borders of Punjab.[42]

Kashmiris practically starved during the early period of the Dogra rule. Famine conditions had become acute by 1865 and the masses did not reconcile to the Dogra rulers. Their economic ruin aggravated the situation and the people had to run away towards Punjab. The shawl weavers had given a lead in this respect, when in 1847, they had started their migration marches towards Lahore. A major portion of farmers and workers migrated to the plains of Punjab between 1865 and 1870.

Many Kashmiris made their way over remote and difficult mountain passes, others by attaching themselves to a foreign visitors' camp. One way or the other they tried to reach Punjab in order to escape from the officials of the Maharaja or Daagh Shawl. They left their wives and children behind because it was impossible for them to take them with them. They did not know whether they would see them again or not, because the path they had to cross was dangerous and risky. But they preferred

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42. Arthur Brinckman, The Wrongs of Kashmir.

it to their imprisonment by the Maharaja.[43]

The First Protest

In 1865, Diwan Kripa Ram was appointed the Governor of Kashmir. In the spring of the same year about 1200 to 1500 shawl baufs decided to meet the new governor at Banihal,[44] to complain to him about their grievances.[45] The new Governor told them that he would listen to them in Srinagar. After reaching Srinagar, he did not keep his word. The new Governor was supposed to recover and pay to the state twelve lakhs of Rupees. The taxation policy of the state was managed in such a way by the employers that its greater burden fell on its

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43. Sheeraza, Op.Cit., P.33.

44. Sir Richard Temple, Journal, Vol.I, P.276.

45. The shawl-baufs had two complains. First was that inconsonance of the Government order, no shawl bauf was allowed to purchase more than eight Kharware of Shali yearly, and that such an amount was insufficient for their support.

    The second complaint was that the deduction in the price of shali sold to them by the Government, which had been ordered by the Dogra Maharaja about three years before, should be allowed to them in full; Arthur Brinckman, Op.Cit.,P.35, S.N.Gadur, Kashmir Papers, P.66.

weavers. Such weaver had to pay 49 rupees as a contribution towards the sum of 12 lakhs of rupees to be paid to the state. An ordinary weaver had, thus, to pay five rupees in tax out of his monthly income, which ranged from seven to eight rupees. This intolerable policy forced them to unite and present a petition of their grievances to the Governor. On April 29th, 1865, they marched towards Zaldagar, the processionists uttered slogans expressing their demands. They carried "a bier, placed a cloth over it shouting "Rajkak is dead, who will give him a grave ?" They also burnt effigy of Rajkak Dhar.[46] They were ordered to disperse but they refused. Troops were then sent under the command of Colonel Bijoy Singh to crush the procession. They came down upon the unarmed and unguarded labourers who were surrounded and then charged with guns and spears. After some deaths, the procession ran towards the bridge of Haji Rather and most of them (after they were persued by soldiers) fell into the marshy canal and got drowned. Hundreds of weavers received major and minor injuries and many of them died and they were later on returned to the people by the army.[47] The leaders of the agitation were arrested and beaten mercilessly, strapped and thrown into a dungeon. Two of the leaders, namely, Abli Baba

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46. S.N.Gadru, Kashmir Papers, P.66, P.N.K.Bamzai, A History of Kashmir, P.668, Sheeraza, Op.Cit.,P.33. G.H.Khan, A History of Freedom Movement, P.79.

47. Nab Shah, Hajeez-ul-Tawarirkh, P.204,Vide,F.M.Hassnain, Op.Cit.,P.46.

and Sheikh Rasool, died from these atrocities, and two brothers, Qidda Lala and Sona Shah, were sent to be imprisoned in the Bahu-Fort. Hundreds of agitators were imprisoned in the prison of Habak, where most of them died from cold and starvation.[48] Heavy fine was imposed on all the four leaders. And when it was known that all the four leaders were poor, it was reduced to Rs. 25,000 in each case. But the Maharaja did not agree to this remission because he wanted to ensure that in future nobody could have the courage to protest. The affair was reported to Jammu, but no enquiries appear to have been made at that time. About a month and a half afterwards, Raj Kak did really died with unenviable feelings, one can fancy and the shawl baufs were left to purchase their rice.[49]

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48. File No.313 E of 1865 (Kashmir Govt. Records), Jammu and Kashmir State Archives).

49. Sheeraza, Op.cit., PP.35-36.

The four leaders of shawl-bauf protest like Sheikh Rasool, Abli Baba, Qidda Lalla and Sona Shah were arrested and brought to Shergarhi Palace and beaten mercilessly. They were thrown in a dungeon. Both Sheikh Rasool and Abli Baba died of artoticities. Some were put into cages and kept at the entrances of the palaces at Jammu and Srinagar, and the passers-by were asked to spit on them and stone them. Thus died human beings in cages like birds without food and water.

Whenever, there was any uprising for freedom, Ranbir Singh put down that with a strong hand and the British shut their eyes on it.[50]

Silk Factory Protest, 1924

The labour rising of 1924 of the Government - owned Silk Factory was another important landmark in the history of workers' movement after the shawlbauf protest in 1865. The main cause of the uprising of the silk factory workers was their miserable economic condition. These workers had been complaining of the "insufficiency of wages, the corruption of the officials and the tyranny of the inspecting staff".[51]

There was, practically speaking, no factory labour in Srinagar, except in the silk factory. With the progressof this industry, however, industrial labour and its problems began to grown in prominence. In the twenties of the present century, the labour problem in

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50. Nature did't take pity on the poor shawl weavers. It was in 1878-79 that famine visited the valley which took a good number of weavers in these years. It is said that they died like flies. Those who surivived could not take up other occupation because they had refined and delicate hands, as a result of which they died in destitution. Lawrence, Op.Cit., P.215; G.L.Koul Kashmir Past and Present, P.45.

51. Dr.Abdul Wahid's statement before Riots Enquiry Committees,His Highness Government of Jammu and Kashmir (written) statement; Part I (English) Srinagar Riots Enquiry Committee, Jammu,Ranbir Government Press (1931), P.111.

Srinagar assumed new proportions, when the conditions in the silk factory worsened. Gradually, the workers become conscious of their rights and raised their voice against exploitation. They had no medical facilities. There was no adequate arrangement for the education of their children. They got low wages considering the amount they put in.[52] So they demanded reasonable wages, and formed Labour Associations. The Srinagar Silk Factory became a centre of attraction, where demonstrations took place in the third decade of the present century. The strike heralded a new age, the age of trade unionism and socialism, which reflected social tension inherent in the emerging industrial system.[53]

Since their protest against the misbehaviour of the officials and their corruption was not heard for a long time, the workers resorted to the method of strike in July 1924. Their strike continued for several days. They adopted several strategies to pressurise the

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52. M.I.Khan, History of Srinagar, PP.82-83. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, Op.Cit., June 13,1924,Item 1. The contention of these labourers was that in addition to their low wages, they were insulted by the officials who demanded bribes and made them work at their houses like domestic servants. They also complained that they were marked absent from duty for half a day if they reached the factory a little late. They demanded a just treatment and an increase of wages.

53. M.I.Khan, Ibid., P.83.

Government to accede to their demands. They convened the workers' meetings and took out processions demanding good treatment, justice and increase in their wages. They were supported by Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam and Anjuman-i-Hamdard in their cause. On July 9th, when they saw the Government had stationed troops within the premises of the Silk Factory, the workers got provoked. They assembled together and challenged the action of the authorities. This was followed by an open confrontation between them and the armed forces. As a result of the opening of fire on the workers, "seven workers died and forty were injured".[54]

The military action generated sympathy in the masses for the labourers with the result that they came out of their houses, and joined the workers. When the authorities on duty failed to disperse the protectors, the military opened fire, killing several and injured many. Some women were humiliated and insulted. The city of Srinagar was handed over to the army who patrolled the areas of distrubance and ordered the people to remain within their houses in peace. The labourers and

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54. Jammu and Kashmir Government Administrative Report, Samvat, 1981, P.9.

their leaders were arrested and imprisoned. The only reaction showed by the masses against the Government decision was that "partial hartal" was observed by the Muslim shopkeepers in the city to protest against the judgement. This brought to an end the Silk Factory of 1924.[55] But the action of the Muslims in their dealing with the labour problem made them believe that so long as the Government was not willing to concede their rights, they had to suffer.

A memorandum presented to Lord Reading during his official tour to Kashmir in 1924 was, therefore, the first attempt made by Muslim subjects in ventilating their grievances and voicing their demand for the grant of their basic rights. The Viceroy arrived in Srinagar on October 14, 1924. While he was taken in a river procession from Shaltang, thousands of men, women, children, school and college students were lined up on the banks of the river Jhelum to greet the guest. It was during the course of this procession that as a mark of protest against the discriminatory treatment accorded to the Muslim subjects in the State, a blank flag demonstration was planned. When the motor launcher of the Viceroy reached the Khanqah Shrine at the bank of the river Jhelum, some of

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55. G. H. Khan, Op.cit., P.39.

the Muslims wearing black turbans on their heads exhibited themselves and they along with other Muslims shouted slogans to the Viceroy to "help us and give us justice". At the other spot of the bank of the Jhelum a banner was unfurled which carried in bold letters the words, "Tyranny, Desecration of the Sacred Places, British protection".[56] However, where the Viceroyal party was put up and lodged, the Muslims presented a memorandum to the Viceroy of their demands. Nothing was known as to what happened to the memorandum; no effective action was taken by the goverrment to mitigate the grievances of the Muslim community. The Maharaja appointed a three - member Commission of Enquiry into the incident. But the commission, comprising only non-Kashmiris, "exonerated the Dogra Goverrment and dismissed the charges as unproved and untrue".[57] Therefore, the Goverrment exiled and dismissed the signitories to the memorandum and also deprived them of their Jagirs. The presentation of the memorandum was an unarranged attempt to express protest to the British authorities, after the Muslims had lost all hopes of receiving justice from their local rulers. It was the result of the efforts of a group of Muslim elite consisting of the business elite, the religious

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56. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, Personal Diary (Unpublished), dated October 14, 1924; Item 1 quoted by G.H.Khan.

57. Mohammad Yousuf Saraf, Kashmiris Fight for Freedom (Lahore), 1978, P.338.

elite, and the educational elite, in the state service. It was simply a protest to acquaint the British authorities with the real conditions of the Muslims masses and a means of seeking redressal of these grievances.

Taking the Silk factory workers revolt and the presentation of the memorandum together, the issues involved in both these protests were of economic character, such as increase of wages, better conditions of work as well as rights of the Muslims which had always been denied to them. The Silk Factory workers had launched a collective action on these issues in the form of strikes. The nature of their protests was non-violent. They also voiced their protests in the shape of processions, raising of slogans, showing placards and banners. The presentation of the memorandum to the Viceroy was also a non-violent protest organised and arranged by the mere conscious cadres of the Muslim educated elite, both religious and non-religious elements. The exhibition of black flags, black turbans and voices raised for justice and help were the forms used to express the protest. But in both these cases, there was no organization. The organizers in both the cases were to some extent successful in mobilising the masses in support of the grievances the Muslim subjects had been suffering for centuries. These developments were encouraging, as it showed that the

Kashmiris were responding to the wave of modernization and awareness and political consciousness.[58]

These strikes and protests generated new ideas and sentiments. People became conscious of their rights and started to organise themselves against the Dogra rule. A political wave began to emerge in the valley.[59]

A similar political wave against autocracy and feudalistic state was coming from the other parts of the country. Jammu was the first to see the effect of this wave on 29th April 1931.[60] Another incident took place at Srinagar in 1931, when Abdul Qadir,[61] in a meeting at Khanqahi Muallah was invited to speak. He delivered a speech which was considered seditious by the Government. He was arrested and charged at court, and the hearing was fixed on 13th July, 1931.[62]

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58. Ibid. PP.362-365.

59. It was in 1931 that the Lahore Muslim Press started to send newspapers through which the Maharaja and his autocratic rule was condemned. There was no existence of press in the valley. It is with this background, that the newspaper started to pour into the state from outside.

60. It was on this very date as ugly incident took place at Jammu, when the state police interferred with the recilation of Khutba by the Muslims after their usual prayer.

61. P.N.Bazaz, Inside Kashmir, Kashmir Publishing Co, 1962, p.129.

62. Triloki Nath Pandita, Social ideas in Kashmir Poetry (1931-47) Dissertation submitted for M.Phil. to the University of Kashmir.

A huge mass of Muslims had assembled outside the Jail and a contingent of sepoys had already been posted to guard it that day. The admittance demanded by the Muslims was resisted. The mob became furious and stoned the sepoys. The sepoys opened fire and twentyone[63] people were killed and many were injured.

It was for the first time in the annals of Kashmir history, that the voice of the people could be heard in public protest. This development in the state was an expression of deep resentment against the unlawful measures and the limit of powers exercised on the people of Kashmir suffering under the rule of autocracy.

Soon after the mass uprising of July 1931, the Maharaja appointed a commission under the presidentship of B.S.Galancy to enquire into the matters and grievances of the Muslim community. As a result of this enquiry, religious places were restored back to the Muslims and other communities and adequate representation to different communities in services was guaranted and proprietary rights to Zamindars on their land were granted. The freedom of press also came into existence in the valley.[64] The movement of 1931 created an undisputed leader of

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63. Ibid.

64. Report of Galancy Commission 1932, PP.1-2.

down - trodden Kashmiris in the person of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who fought against economic exploitation and political oppression. Kashmiris composed many folk verses in his praise and courage.[65]

شیخ محمد عبداللہ شیرہ کھوتہ پیروٚن یے
دینچھ رکھ پیٹھ نوٚن یے دراو
صوٚر کہ بہو دورو کریو گوٚر گورو
پنہ وُتھرن کیاہ چھُ لیکھتہ
شیر کشمیر زندہ باد

He founded the Muslim Conference in 1932 which spear - headed the movement till 1939.

He made nationalism, secularism and socialism the guiding principles of his career.[66] It was in this background that he separated from his colleagues and established his own "All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference" in 1939. He included in this party like - minded persons,[67] men of strong socialist convictions,

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65. As quoted by Farooq Ahmad Bhat. The above song speak the love and regards Kashmiris had for their leader, who voiced against the age-old oppression, injustice and economic exploitation.

66. Lord Birdwood, Two nations and Kashmir, 1956, P.33.

67. There were G.M.Sadiq, Madan Lal, Ali Mohammad, Ved Prakash, Ragunath, Vashnnavi, D.P.Dhar,

who by their sincere efforts geared the freedom movement of Kashmir towards right direction.

There was profound impact of socialistic state of Russia on the leadership of the National Conference. The peoples' leader persisted with his sagacious efforts and steered the shaky ship of Kashmiris' freedom struggle clear of marshes. By and by the educated middle classes of other communities also appreciated his progressive outlook and rallied around him. It was not only the National Conference which aimed to establish a socialistic society in the state, but the "All Jammu and Kashmir Kisan Conference too wanted to achieve the same goal.

This party believed strongly in socialism. The first president of the conference was Abdul Salam Yettoo, whose party brought to surface new socialist fervour and met at Dialgam for the first time. In his presidential address, he explained the aims and objectives in the following words : "The movement of the toiling masses in the world has awakened us also, we have begun to look at the freedom movement struggle of our country from a

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Peer Giasuddin, Gulam Rasool Reenzoo, Motilal Misri, Janki Nath Zutshi, J.L. Kilam,Mohammad Anwar Akhoon, Baha-ud-Din Zahid, Sardar Darban Singh, Ram Payara Saraf, Kishen Dev Sethi, Mohammad Lone and Miss Mahmuuda Ali Shah, who was the first socialist lady and stood for the cause of socialism.

different angle. New political freedom alone is not our cherished goal. We demand and crave for social,economic and spiritual emancipation as well. The toiling masses of the sub-continent of India not only want to throw away the yoke of foreign imperialism, but are also keen to face themselves from the bondage of indigenous feudalism and capitalism. The deliverance from alien rule is not far off. Events bear testomony to the fact that the British cannot stay long in India. There is an awakening in the country that the British hold it in subjugation. But let me pose a question : who will replace the British authority in India? Will there be a Government of upper classes or one representing the toiling masses?[68] He concluded his speech in the following words:-

> Out movement is world-wide, Hundreds and millions of toiling masses throughout the world are associated with it. It is bound to succeed sooner or later. If we organise ourselves and march unitedly towards our goal, we can establish the society of our conception sooner than is expected".[69]

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68. P.N.Bazaz, The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir,Cultural and Political from the Earliest times, New Delhi, 1954, PP.237-38.

69. Ibid.

Thus the freedom movement was given more impetus on the principles of socialist ideology by the Kisan Conference and the hope of the advent of a new era in the political, economic and social life of Kashmir arose in the hearts of the tyrannised and presecuted millions in the valley.

With the passage of time, the National Conference became a more powerful organization than any other party in the state. The party for the first time adopted the "Naya Kashmir Plan" in 1944 on the principle of socialism as its objective.[70] It was welcomed by the people of Kashmir, since it reflected their basic urges and sentiments. At the same time, it prepared the people to fight against the feudal forces and evils of social disorder.

Sheikh Abdullah's foresight and his faith in secularism was the background of his political goal. He

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70. Ibid., The Naya Kashmir document consists of fifty articles and is divided into two parts viz., the constitution of the state and the National economic Plans. The National economic Plan proclaimed that the objective of National Conference was to create a classless society in which every individual would have the right to develop and to enjoy better standards of life by eradicating means of exploitation and providing equal opportunities for all.

launched the "Quit Kashmir Movement" in May 1946 and was wholeheartedly supported by the congress leaders of India, so that the age-long tyranny and suppression would end and establishment of democratic government be possible.[71]

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71. G.L.Koul, Kashmir through the Ages, P.164.

C H A P T E R - VII

MODERNISATION OF KASHMIR LITERATURE

MODERNIZATION OF KASHMIRI LITERATURE

Literature mirrors life. It is the expression of man's experience, emotions and achievements over the centuries. It reflects human civilization, with a moulding of human behaviour representing culture. It can be expressed through prose, poetry, drama, short-stories and novels.

The Dogra period (1846-1947) witnessed the emergence of most kashmiri authors and poets who wrote in Persian, Sanskrit, Urdu, English and Kashmiri and thus created a taste for literature. It is noteworthy that Persian, which was the official language of Kashmir for over four centuries, influenced and enlarged Kashmiri vocabulary to a large extent. Kashmiri poets adopted the ghazal, the masnavi, the naat, the marsiya and other Persian forms. They also turned to the typical Persian themes such as the story of Laila-Majnun, Shirin - Khusarau and Sohrab Rustum.[1] The prominent poets of the Dogra period included Mirza Mehdi Mujrim, Mulla Ubaid-Ullah, Kh. Hassan Koul, Mehdi Shah Dika, Hasan Shah Zirak,

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1. M.I.Khan, History of Srinagar, Asmir Publications, Srinagar, 1978, P.192.

Shams-ud-Din Hairat Kamili, Kh. Mohammad Shah, Asad, Mirza Saad-ud-Din and Hashyar.[2] Most of these poets write against the economic policy of the Government and the intellectual degeneration of the Kashmiri Muslims. There were only a few Persian prose writers during the period. Among them Ghulam Nabi Shah Khanyari and Haji Mohi-ud-Din Miskin deserve special mention. They discussed the social, economic, political,religious and literary history of Kashmir in their respective writings titled Wajeez-ut-Tawarikh[3] and Tarikh-i-Kabir.[4]

Similarly, Sanskrit saw its bloom during the Dogra period and achieved a fantastic delicacy due to the several measures taken for the revival and development of this language. Maharaja Ranbir Singh in particular is reported to have appointed proficient Pandits to teach Sanskrit.[5] Two notable Sanskrit scholars of his reign are Sahib Ram who wrote Tritha Sangraha and Pandit Madhu Sudhan Koul who edited and critically appreciated Abhinavagupta's Tantralok.

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2. Miskin, Mohi-ud-Din, Tarikh-Kabir-i-Kashmir, Suraj Prakash Press, Amritsar, 1894,PP.350-352.
3. It is in manuscript form and not published yet.
4. M.I. Khan, Op.cit, P.192.
5. Ibid, P.193.

As far as Urdu is concerned, it began to develop under the influence of new factors and a spirit of dissatisfaction with Persian, and Sanskrit started to show itself in the latter years of the Dogra period.Some of the Kashmiri Urdu poets and story writers of the period may be mentioned: Khushi Mohammad Nazir, famous for his Naghmai Firdous, Master Zinda Lal Koul and Nand Lal Talib who authored Rushhat-ul-Takhayyul and Ghulam Rasul Naziki, known for his collection of poems,Nazaakat. Among the prose writers in Urdu the notable ones were: Abdul Ahad Azad, Prem Nath Pardesi and Pitambar Dhar Faani. Azad's famous book Kashmiri Zuban Aur Shairi deals with the history of Kashmiri literature, whereas Pardesi's short stories depict the social evils of Kashmiri society. In addition, there were also some prominent Urdu journalists such as Mir Abdul Aziz, Moulavi Mohammad Sayyid Masudi, Janki Nath Zutshi, Ghulam Ahmad Kashfi, Nand Lal Watal, Kashiyap Bhandu, Jagan Nath Sathu and Prem Nath Bazaz.[6]

The dawn of the present century witnessed the emergence of a few Kashmiri authors who wrote in English. Pandit Anand Koul wrote, The Kashmiri Pandit, Geography of Jammu and Kashmir State, The Archeological remains in Kashmir. He also contributed articles on the history

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6. Ibid., P.200.

and literature of Kashmir to journals of national and international repute. Writers like R.C.Kak, Prem Nath Bazaz, Jia Lal Koul, Gawash Lal Koul, Som Nath Dhar and others depicted in their writings some social economic and political factors which help us in understanding the causes that led to the growth of freedom struggle in Kashmir.

Kashmiri Literature : A Scenario

It is noteworthy that from the beginning of the twentieth century a new order began to emerge in the literature of Kashmir. Persian and the Persian themes which had previously dominated the literature were relegated to the background and within few years Kashmiri poetry and prose become a powerful and supple instrument of expression. This new development marked the end of the medieval ways of thinking and the beginning of modernisation of the Kashmiri mind and literature. This type of change could be attributed to:[7]

(a) Improved means of transport and communication.

(b) Linking the valley with the rest of India which made possible tourist inflow and enabled young Kashmiris to go outside for higher studies.

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7. Ibid., P.194.

(c) Contact with outside forces.

(d) Impact of Indian freedom struggle creating a new ferment in the minds of intelligentsia and an awakening in the souls of the men.

(e) Introduction of Urdu in place of Persian, as the court language.

(f) Middle class developed a keen interest in Urdu and English.

It may be indicated here that the Christian missionaries contributed in a big way in the evolution and development of modern Kashmiri literature by preparing grammars, dictionaries and translation from English into Kashmiri. T.R. Wade compiled a Kashmiri grammar and translated The New Treatment into Kashmiri.[8] Again, J.Hinton Knowles collected a number of Kashmiri proverbs and riddles and published them alongwith English translation, notes and comments. He also published a collection of Kashmiri folk tales in English.[9]

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8. T.R.Wade, Grammar of Kashmiri language, London, 1888.

9. J.H.Knowels, A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs, London, 1888.

In 1919, Stein and George Grierson published Kashmiri folk tales titled Hatim's tales[10] A Kashmiri - Sanskrit dictionary compiled by Pandit Ishwar Koul was utilised by Grierson for the preparation of his Kashmiri - English dictionary which was published in 1932 by the Royal Asiatic Society under the title of Dictionary of Kashmiri Language,[11] He is also reported to have published Lalla vaakh[12] (sayings of Lalla Ded).

Meanwhile under these historical developments poets felt that Kashmiri poetry needed radical change. They composed verses which touched upon the socio-economic and political life of the people of Kashmir. The poets infused a new spirit into artisans, peasants, labourers and other toiling classes who pitted themselves against feudal and imperial forces. The most prominent among them were Ghulam Ahmad 'Mahjoor,' Abdul Ahad 'Azad' Mirza Ghulam Hasan Beigh 'Arif', Abdul Sataar 'Aasee; Zinda Lal Koul, Dina Nath 'Nadim,' Pir Ghulam Qadir and Pithember Nath Dhar 'Faani'. They have been considered the main contributors to the modern Kashmiri literature,

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10. Sir Ayrel Stein and Sir George Grierson, Hattms' tales, London, 1919.

11. Sir George Grierson, A Dictionary of the Kashmiri, Language, 4 Vols. Calcutta, 1932.

12. M. I. Khan, Op.cit., P.194.

since they discarded mostly traditional forms and themes expressed the vehement desire for a just society.

In order to understand and know more about the modern Kashmiri literature in its proper perspective, the rest of the chapter is divided into two parts, The first part deals with the poetry whileas the second part surveys the prose in Kashmiri literature.

Poetry

This section is restricted to the study of the contributions made by three great poets of Kashmir viz. Ghulam Ahmad 'Mahjoor', Abdul Ahad 'Azad' and Mirza Ghulam Hasan Beigh 'Aarif', towards the enrichment and development of Kashmiri literature as also their nationalist and socialistic ideas.

MAHJOOR

Peerzada Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor is called the father of modern Kashmiri poetry. He was born in 1888 at Metragam, District Pulwama. He was the son of Peerzada Abdullah Shah, who was a Persian and Arabic scholar. His mother Sayyida Begum was well read in Persian literature. Mahjoor received his early education from his father.[13] He was very intelligent from his

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13. P.N.Bazaz, Struggle for freedom in Kashmir, P.294.

childhood and learnt nine centos of the Holy Quran by heart at an early age. His father sent him Tral to study under the poet Ali Ganaie Ashaiq.[14] Later Mahjoor joined Islamia High School in Srinagar run by a well known Muslim organisation, Nusratul Islam, wherefrom he passed his middle school examination.[15]

As briefly indicated earlier the improved means of road transport and communication linking the valley with the rest of India made it possible for visitors to come to Kashmir and young Kashmiris to go outside for higher studies. Immediately after Mahjoor had passed his examination and left schooling, one Sayyid Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din of Layalpur, Punjab visited Kashmir and developed family relations with the parents of Mahjoor.[16] He invited Mahjoor to visit Punjab. Thus Mahjoor found a chance and left his home for Amritsar (Punjab) where he stayed for about two years with Sayyid Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din. During the period Mahjoor learnt the art of calligraphy and was introduced to Urdu poets like Moulavi Bismil Amritsari and Moulana Shibli Nomani.[17]

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14. Abdul Ahad Azad, Kashmiri Zuban Aur Shairi, P.192.
15. M.I.Khan, Op.cit., P.194.
16. Abdul Ahad Azad, Op.cit., P.192.
17. Ibid.

He was also associated with Munshi Mohammad Din Fauq who published a monthly Kashmiri Magazine at Layalpur.[18] Mahjoor returned to Kashmir in 1907 and was married in 1908. Meanwhile Choudhari Khushi Mohammad[19] got him appointed as a Patwari in Ladakh and was pleased with him. He continued to serve as Patwari and afterwards Ghirdawar till he retired in 1943.[20] But this was all against the wishes of his parents. His father was desirious enough that his son would take up his father's profession. But the post being progressive refused to adopt his fathers profession. He spoke these words before his father.[21]

"A strong and healthy Peerzada had no right to accept presents, charity and rewards. How a deciple be compensated by the Peer? After all what will be the name of that income which is secured without work? I bid good-bye to such ill-got money. I can earn for myself... I can not roam about on horse back and on exploitation, and also can not like to eat the good feasts in poor families".

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18. T.N.Pandita, Social ideas in Kashmiri Poetry, Dissertation submitted for M.Phil to the University of Kashmir.
19. Chowdhari Khushi Mohammad was a Settlement Officer of the State.
20. Abdul Ahad Azad, Op.Cit.,P.193.
21. Ibid; P.193; M.L.Saqi, Kashur, Srinagar, 1973, P.230.

Mahjoor witnessed many ups and downs during the sixtyfour years of his life. The state was governed until 1948 by the Dogras with the British Resident. The valley was very backward. Mahjoor was deeply distressed to the plight of artisans, weavers, workers and other professionals. It was a period of social evils like begging people, especially peasants, were burdened with heavy taxation and corruption. Mahjoor was greatly moved by the abject conditions of people in all spheres of life. He felt impelled to compose verses through which he conveyed his message to the people for freedom and revolt against the existing forces of oppression.

Mahjoor was a born poet in the real sense. He started composing verses in 1905, and in 1912, he began to write Urdu verses, but soon he was stirred to writing Kashmiri by the fortunate circumstances of listening to a song sung in chorus by some village belles.[22] Mahjoor's greatest contribution is that he popularized Kashmiri. His songs enriched with beautiful smiles and metaphere were on the lips of the masses in Kashmir. His lyrice patriotic and political poems was his great laurels.[23]

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22. J.L.Koul, Studies in Kashmiri, P.82.

23. The cultural digest, Vol.I, No.IV, September, 1995, PP.9-10.

As already mentioned, the majority of the population suffered under the callous yoke of feudalism. The hardships that the common people was undergoing were aggrevated by social evils and bureaucratic banglings. The poet raised voice against all such mal-practices and condemned exploitation. The poet exhorted the labourers and peasants to be united, so that the past evils could be eradicated from the social set-up. Thus he wrote:[24]

"Oh worker and peasant be united seek
your own rights, leave begging and praying".

(To Jagirdars).

He aroused people through his poetry against the money-lenders, grocers and black-smiths who used to snatch even heap of com from the peasants.[25]

Mahjoor was a nationalist. He had a deep love and affection for the valley of Kashmir. He sang of the glory of his land and its inhabitants. He sang of the flowers, mountains, rivers and hills of the valley. He was perhaps, the first poet, who sang about the beauty of the valley, when he wrote the poem "Gulshan Wattan

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24. Manzoor Fazili, Socialist ideas and Movements in Kashmir, New Delhi, 1980, P.146.

25. Payami Mahjoor, Vol.3, P.20.

Chu Somuy" or "our country is a garden."

"The bulbul sings to the flowers,
A garden is our land,
Like wells of white marble
The mountain speaks enclose
A sunny space of emerald green...
The sweet gift of spring,
To fountains, rivelets, streams
And water falls in Music.[26]

Mahjoor undoubtedly had pride in ancient culture and past achievements of Kashmir. He disliked communalism and preached humanism and brotherhood amongst his countrymen. He advocated the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, which was to him "One of the[27] cardinal principles of Kashmir culture." He wanted a society in which equality would prevail and which would be without any distinction between rich and poor.

"Let you mix milk and sugar again. Hindus will keep the helm and Muslims ply the cars. Let you together row (ashore) the beat of this country."[28]

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26. Raina, T.N. An Anthology of Kashmir Verse, P.73.
27. P.N.Bazaz, Struggle for freedom in Kashmir, P.296.
28. Kaumudi, Kashmir and its cultural heritage, P.57.

The rich and the poor, weak and the strong, shall not persist, equality shall prevail, man shall tum humane".[29]

Mahjoor was convinced that the feudal monarchy would come to an end. 'Bulbul' would be the guardian of Kashmiris. These poor people would enjoy the fragrance of the flowers, after the alien rulers are driven out of the soil of Kashmir. The poet says :-

> "Bulbul shall rule over, Falcon shall have to obey
> Hawks shall be your guards".[30]

It is pertinent to note that Mahjoor touched upon new themes such as "the country lose, "My youth", Arise O Gardener and "our country is a garden". In his "Arise O Gardener" Mahjoor urged the Kashmiris to attain freedom through earthquaks, galse, thunder and storms. The poem gained such popularity that it was adopted by the National Conference as the national song.[31] Throughout his life he mirrored the new stirrings of the time, through his ghazals and geets.[32] The poet in his "Gris Sund Gareh" or Peasant's home, hoped that the era of tyranny will come to an end. Big landlords, Chakidars and money-lenders will go to wall. In his another poem "Nali-Kashmir" he has expressed that the poor people's labour provided all comforts for the

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29. Socialist ideas and movements in Kashmir, P.160.
30. Ibid, P.159.
31. M.I.Khan, Op.Cit., P.195.
32. J.L.Koul, Op.Cit, PP. 82-83.

rich, but could not afford to enjoy themselves. But at the same time, he expressed the hope that the day would come when the poor labourers would get an opportunity to enjoy in their own home. In this way he inspired the people to revolt against the tyranny and oppression. He desired to see the Kashmir free from the clutches of Dogra exploitation.[33] The famous song "Baghi Nishat ke Gulo" was recorded by Columbia recording company in 1936 and his fame spread for and wide. It was this song that proved to be the beginning of his emergence, as a national poet.[34] It is said that Habba Khatoon made the structure of Kashmiri poetry. Rasul Mir, Lal Ded and Bhawani Das gave soul to it, other nourished it, but Mahjoor revived it in its real form and made it worthy for the masses.[35]

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33. Socialist ideas and movements in Kashmir, P.146.

34. P.N.Bazaz, Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir, P. 295.

35. Abdul Ahad Azad, Op.cit.,P.237.

Commenting on Mahjoor's poetry, Master Zinda Lal Koul says, "Besides being very musical and correct in the technique of rhythm and rhyme, Mahjoor is perhaps the first to introduce into Kashmiri the idea of petriotism, human freedom, love and mankind, unity of Hindus and Muslims, dignity of work, respect for manual labour and nature".[36] In the words of Balraj Sahini, "Mahjoor's songs and poems are the cherished property of every man, woman and child living between Baramulla and Pautsal. If he writes a poem today, it will be on the lips of the populance within a fortnight, children on their way to school, girls thrashing rice, boatmen plying oars, labourers bending in their ceaseless tril, all will sing it".[37] During his visit to Kashmir in 1915, Rabindra Nath Tagore was deeply impressed by Mahjoor's poetry.[38] Tagore immensely admired him and acknowledged him as the Wordsworth of Kashmir.[39]

Mahjoor was an architect of his own environments in which he was born. He championed the cause of Hindu - Muslim unity through his poetry. Through his songs and

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36. The Cultural Digest, Op.Cit., PP. 9-10.

37. The Vishwa Bharti Quarterly, November, 1938, Vol.IV Part III, New Series, PP. 213-221.

38. Kashmir Today, Vol.IV,No.III,March,April,1979, PP.30-31.

39. Abdul Ahad Azad, Op.Cit., P.222.

ghazals he infused the spirit of nationalism among the Kashmiris and urged them to stand united in the cause of freedom. He was not totally against the traditional values of life, but was against exploitation, oppression and wanted a society of brotherhood and equality. He was a true patriot. He instilled hope into the depressed souls of his compatriots and urged them to hold aloft the banner of freedom.

AZAD

Born at village Ranger (Chawdora), District Badgam, South-West of Srinagar in 1903.[40] Abdul Ahad Dar Azad received his early education from his father Sultan Dar in Persian and Arabic. Afterwards, he was sent to a local school. He studied the Holy Quran and Persian literature in his teens. He learnt Urdu by Patient effort and in 1929 passed the Munshi examination.[41] Prior to that, he was appointed Arabic teacher in Zowhama School in 1919. Azad breathed his last on April 4, 1948, following surgery for apendicities in the SMHS Hospital Srinagar. His dead body was taken to his native village, where he was burried in the family graveyard. He lived in penury and died a destitute.

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40. P.N.Bazaz, Op.Cit., P.298.

41. M.L.Saqi, Gashir, Srinagar, 1973, P.4.

Azad started composing poems at the age of fifteen under the poetic name 'Ahad' which he later changed into 'Janbaz'. In the later years, he revised his philosophy of life and from 'Janbaz' he became 'Azad'. Reportedly, his father was in the habit of reciting poems and songs of Moulana Roomi and Hafiz Sheirazi and this helped Azad to discover and develop the poet and good singer in himself.[42]

Azad was intelligent. He was a man of eloquence and a man of understanding. His expression was sweet. He was witty and had a strong memory.[43] He met Mahjoor in 1935, when he was undergoing a training course in a teachers' training school. Under Mahjoor's influence he started writing in Kashmiri. However, his literary influences were Iqbal and the progressive writers. This influence is clearly indicated by Azad's 'Shikwa-i-Iblis'. Unlike Mahejoor, who was a nationalist, Azad yearned for a socialistic pattern of society.

Azad lived at a time, when world witnessed great changes. The world was challenging the traditional values of life and accepting new onces. World War and Russian

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42. Pandita, Op.Cit.,P.61.

43. Padam Nath Ganjoo, Kulvati Azad, P.37.

Revolution had taken place. In 1931, Kashmir also experienced a mass uprising. He was greatly influenced by these movements and urged his countrymen to raise against age-long tyranny and injustice and infused the spirit of revolutionary ideas in the modern poetry. His cherished desire was to establish a classless society. where no 'indivious discrimination could thrive'[44] He exhorted people through his poetry to recognise his rights, position in society and to stand against all such differences, which were prevalent in the then social set up. The following lines are witnessing the fact:-

"Recognise yourself, enjoy the love,
Away with slavery, show your wit ,
You made rich named him Nawab,
Therefore,foster Revolution-foster Revolution".[45]

Azad was aware of the fact, that it was a labourer who had brought revolution in Russia. He believes firely that it is labourer only and not the leader, who brings revolution in the society and sets forth ideal for creating a class-less society.[46]

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44. Pushp, Kashmiri Literature, P.116.

45. Socialistic ideas and movements in Kashmir,P.185.

46. Azad being a man of progressive outlook was very much influenced by the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Azad refused to bow his head before the rulers of land, who had sucked the blood of poor Kashmiris. He exhorted people to fight against all sorts of mal-practices, such as social injustice and oppression. The poet was pained to see the condition of Kashmiris during the Dogra period. He thus says:-

"My body is in pain, it cries like a hollow pipe,
I am not delicate, nor my speech eloquent,
Slavery has encircled me like a reptile,
This poison and fear has wrecked me".[47]

The poet in his another poem "Daryaw" or (Song of a River) has again inspired people for revolution. Dr. Kaumedi is right in saying that in this poem the rhythmic movements of the waters in symbolic of a call for action and revolt for freedom.

The lines of poem says :-

"I hurl myself against stone ramponts,
And other mortal burriers,
Then collecting once again the fragments
of my scattered self,
I hurl down rocks, wear down hills,
And roam in the forests free".[48]

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47. Socialist ideas and movements in Kashmir, P.171.

48. An Anthology of Modern Kashmiri verse, PP.96-97.

Azad's poetry is full of revolutionary thoughts, and awakes the masses to stood against the oppression of Dogras. His greatest desire seems to have been to constitute a just social set-up in which freedom, equality and equality could prevail.

To him nationalism is 'Jugglery' and cause of 'enmity' between man and man. He says, 'there would be different skies with different races, Had God wished to divide the human race".[49]

Though Azad's poetry is full of love and romance, it cannot be denied that he struck a new note in Kashmiri poetry. As Dr. Kaumudi observes, "Love is not the consuming passion of Azad. He is capable of great heights, and invoking through the despair of love, a dynamic message for action and revolution".[50] Azad's humanism, immense faith in man eliminating all distinctions of caste, colour and creed is reflected in his sincere, political works. He preached the gospel of love and universal brotherhood. He was sure enough that he was free intellectually and spirtually, but was anxious enough that the Kashmiris should also share such freedom with him. To him the notions of 'Kufr' and 'Din' were

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49. Ibid, P.386.

50. Kaumudi, Kashmir, its cultural heritage, P.80.

nothing but empty drum-beating. He says, "Pray, announce to all the Kashmiris the secrets thou has confined to Azad:

After casting away childish, frevolities of Kufr and Din."[51] Azad refused to be a communal. His songs are truely and sincerely against religious bigotry. He was first poet, who spoke against religious prejudices. He was not in favour of such religion, which teaches emmity and develops hatred between man and man. He says, it is better to send that religion back to God as a gift. He refused to accept such religion.

"If Puja and Nimaz are different,
I shall send such religion there as a gift".[52]

It was Azad's great desire that political slavery, social injustice, economic backwardness, cultural degeneration and mutual emmity be done away with and in its place be longed for the constitution of just society, and a new order that could change man's outlook. He insisted to his people that they should fight against injustice, tyranny and exploitation which the Kashmiris were facing under the feudulistic government. He expressed his deep concern against such inhuman activities.

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51. Ibid., P.85.

52 Kuliyat Azad, P.381.

The following lines indicate his fervour:"To become free, to end tyranny and to abolish superstition."

This is my cherished dream, my desire and my slogan".[53]

Azad was a great literary genius. He not only composed poems, but also wrote the history of Kashmiri literature in Urdu under the title Kashmiri Zaban Aur Shaire in three volumes. This literary history has become the primary source of information on Kashmiri literature. He also compiled a biography of Mahjoor.

ARIF

Born in 1910 in Srinagar. Mirza Ghulam Hasan Beigh Arif's poetical attempts were most intimately linked to the political developments in Srinagar during the period under review. He had been associated with many literary and cultural activities and was a prominent figure in the field of Kashmiri literature for several decades. He was the organiser of many Mushairas held in Srinagar. He gave Kashmiri literature a new direction and status, when he founded the first Bazme Adab, in 1940, in Srinagar. His literary influence came from Iqbal,Ghalib, Hazrat Mohani, Chakbest, Josh, Faiz and Munshi Prem Chand.

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53. Ibid., P.83.

During his life, Arif never liked any romantic poetry; instead he composed verses in which he showed various aspects of social and political life in Kashmir. He believed that the national freedom could assume its full significance only if it acquired a social revolutionary content. He found his themes in the life of labourers, artisans and beggars. He was greatly moved by the plight of the peasantry. He was acutely sensitive to the wretched condition of the people, and composed verses, through which he conveyed his message of freedom to the working class. A majority of the people suffered under the callous yoke of feudalism and bore hardship generated by social evils and bureaucratic bunglings. He raised his voice against all this. He exhorted the labourers and peasantry to be united so that the past evils could be eradicated from the social set up.

Arif was proud of the ancient culture and past achievements of Kashmir. He disliked communalism and preached humanism and brotherhood among the Kashmiris. He advocated the cause of Hindu - Muslim unity, which was to him one of the cardinal principles of Kashmiri culture.

Arif's sensibility was also touched by the poverty of the labourers around him. He deplored the lot of these poor people whose labour provided all the comforts

for the rich people. He felt sorry for the labourers who being a source of enjoyment for the rich could never afford to enjoy themselves.

Arif was pained to observe the poverty and adversity of the Kashmiris. His poetry is full of revolutionary idealism. His greatest desire was to constitute a just social set-up in which freedom and equality could prevail. Many of his poems testify to his sincere interest in social change. His sang of man's liberation from the old social order. Thus he broke away from stereotyped traditions and mors.

Kashmiri Prose

It is distressing to note that Kashmiri prose did not receive much attention during the Dogra period and thus Kashmiri literature could not get enriched in prose. We had no prose writers until 1936, when Jia Lal Koul for the first time, introduced a Kashmiri section in the Pratap magazine of S.P. College, wherein he adopted Persian - Arabic alphabet with suitable modification.[54] Among other things,Kashmiri translations of Hindi plays "Ramun Raj", "Savitri" and "Satach Kahwat"

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54. J.L.Koul, Op.Cit, P.99.

were also incorporated in the magazine. However, the credit for writing original Kashmiri prose goes to Mahjoor's son who in 1940 started the first weekly magazine in Kashmiri. It was called Gaash. It covered not only the local news, but also published Mahjoor's poems. One of the interesting columns of the magazine was "Asun Ta Gindun" which led to its increased readership. Due to one reason or the other Gaash could not continue its publication for long.

The Quit Kashmir Movement gave impetus to Kashmiri literature. It called for the concerted efforts by the Kashmiri elite for writing Kashmiri prose.It is encouraging to note that in 1945 the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA)[55] opened its branch in Srinagar and for the first time in the history of Kashmiri literature, a Kashmiri play titled Bata Har was written by PremNath Pardesi, on the exploitation of the peasantry. As ill luck would have it, the play could not be staged since the Government confiscated the mamuscript.[56] as it contained some objectionable material against the authorities.

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55. Ibid, P.102.

56. Ibid.

CHAPTER - VIII

SECULARISATION MUSLIM POLITICS

SECULARISATION OF MUSLIM POLITICS

The conversion of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference into the National Conference symbolises the secularization of Muslim politics in the valley of Kashmir. The secularization did not take place all of a sudden. But there were certain developments within and without Muslim Conference, which ultimately led to the conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference. These developments were the appearance of political rivalry among the leaders of the valley, both political and religious, the hostile role played by the Hindu communities and the Dogra Government, against the freedom struggle conducted by Muslims and the consequent emergence of radical forces and their role in redirecting the movement which ultimately threw the doors of the Muslim Conference open to all sections of Kashmiri society without any distinction of caste, colour, and creed. S.M.Abdullah was the main figure who played a markable role in providing secular politics to the people of Jammu and Kashmir State.[1]

Political Rivalry between Mirwaiz Mohammad Yousuf Shah and Sheikh Abdullah

Since 1931, when the movement was started by S.M.Abdullah, there emerged a political rivalry between Sheikh Abdullah and Mirwaiz Moulvi Yousuf Shah. They had

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1. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, The History of Freedom struggle in Kashmir. The Aina (Weekly) Srinagar, September 30, 1972, p.4.

differences between them and these differences grew so severe that the Muslims were involved in factions, which ultimately led to a clear-cut schism between the Sheikh and the Mirwaiz. Two major factious groups came into being, one led by the Sheikh and the other by the Mirwaiz. Both leaders took opposite directions.[2] The followers of one group became sworn enemies of the other group and thus for the people politics became more an affair of loyalty to their respective leaders than to the cause of freedom movement. The result was that factional strifes between their followers began to take place on a large scale, which resulted in chaos and confusion in the society.[3]

These strifes threatened the very foundations of the movement. And for some time it seemed that the people had become more loyal to their leaders than to the movement. Under such circumstances, some well meaning people, like

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2. Both the leaders earned two nick names, which came the part of Kashmir history. The Mirwaiz was nicknamed Bakra, which means goat. S.M.Abdullah was nicked named as Gada-Kala, which in Kashmiri means head of a fish, ultimately Sher and Bakra became applicable to the followers of the Sheikh and the Mirwaiz respectively.

3. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, Personal Dairy (1907-1950), Mamuscript unpublished, January, 22, 1932, item 2.

Sheikh Mohammad Sadiq of Amritsar, tried to make conciliation between the two leaders, but could not succeed.[4] In July 1932,"the Itihad-i-Muslimeen" also tried to bring unity between the Sheikh and the Mirwaiz.[5] In August 1932, similar efforts were made by a learned group of Muslims like Mirwaiz Hamadani, Ghulam Qadir Bhangi, Moulavi Abdullah Vakil and Mubarak Shah, but they failed in their task, and could do nothing for conciliation between the two leaders.[6]

Keeping in view the disordered conditions created by the factious strifes, the Government imposed a ban on August 18, 1932, under section 144 of the Indian Penal Code, within the Municipal limits of the city, on all the three leaders namely, Sheikh Abdullah, Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah and Mirwaiz Hamadani, not to make any political speeches. But speeches of social and religious topics were exempted from this ban. Still these strifes continued unabated.[7]

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4. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit. June 22, 1932. Item 3.

5. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., p.5. This association was established by some young men belonging to different sects and parties. But soon this association was petered out, as some of its members were accused of belonging to Ahmadiya sect.

6. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit., August 14, 1932, Item 2.

7. Ibid. August 19, 1932, item 2. Prof. Alim-ud-Din Salik also worked for conciliation between Sheikh and Mirwaiz. But he too failed in his task.

The gulf of political rivalry between the two leaders got widened when the controversy over the funds of the Muslim Conference took place. Moulavi Yousuf Shah accused the Sheikh and his colleagues of having misused the funds of the Muslim Conference. The Sheikh also levelled the same charges on the Moulavi Yousuf Shah. These allegations and counter allegations only helped to further alienate the rival factions. The political atmosphere in the city became so adverse that the Prime Minister Colvin and some Muslim officials of the State felt uneasy. The Deputy Inspector of Police, Waiz Khan, and the Additional District Magistrate, Sheikh Abdul Rasid, tried in their un-official capacity to bring peace between the two groups. The leaders were advised to refrain from making personal attacks against each other.[8] For some time it looked as though the dust had settled down.

Factions between Moulavi Yousuf Shah and Mirwaiz Hamadani

Quarrels were reported in April 1933 between Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah and Mirwaiz Hamadani of Khanqah-i-Mualla, over the right of preaching in the mosques. During this period Sheikh Abdullah had gone to Punjab. They clashes over the mosques were very fierce. The Government

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8. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, p.4.

became concerned and it "prohibited both Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah and Mirwaiz Hamadani from preaching for the present".[9] But the Government orders were challenged by Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, who said that the ban was an undue interference in religious matters which could not be tolerated".[10]

On April 24, 1933, notices were served on the leaders by the Additional Magistrate of the city to deposit one thousand rupees each under Section 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code failing which they would have to undergo an imprisonment of one year. Mirwaiz Hamadani deposited the security money but Mirwaiz Shah did not, with the result that he was arrested on 27 April, but was later on released on his depositing the required sum of one thousand rupees.[11]

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9. Telegram No.9 from Resident of Kashmir to Pollindia, New Delhi dated April 10, 1933, File 43/11/33, Political Secret.

10. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi; op.cit. The Aina (Weekly) Srinagar, April, 1973, p.4.

11. Telegram from Resident of Kashmir to Pollindia, Simla, dated May 1, 1933, File No. 43/11 of 1933, Government of India Home Department, Political Section (National Archives of India). "Syyed Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari (Kreri)"furnished the security ~~xx~~ on behalf of Moulavi Yousuf Shah, Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit.

The release of Moulavi Yousuf Shah was again followed by strifes between the followers of the two parties.[12] On May 25, 1933, one Khalil Wani, belonging to Sheikh Abdullah's party was fatally injured in a fight and a few days later, he passed away in hospital. This incident caused a law and order problem and the Government finally decided to arrest the ring leaders of both the parties.[13] The result was that Sheikh Abdullah and other leaders were arrested but neither of the Mirwaizes was touched.[14]

During the imprisonment of S.M.Abdullah, Moulavi Yousuf Shah organised a separate political party named the All Jammu and Kashmir Azad Muslim Conference. This attempt of the Mirwaiz closed the possibility of any understanding with the Muslim Conference. This organisation was actually organised in order to counter the Muslim Conference led by Sheikh Abdullah.

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12. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail. op.cit. May 12, 1933. These strifes grew more widespread on April 28 1933. On May 8, 1933 Bashir-ul-Din Mahmud Ahmad resigned from the Presidentship of the All India Kashmir Committee and Dr.Iqbal was elected the New President.

13. Telegram No.1 from Resident of Kashmir to Pollindia, May 30, 1933, File No.43/11 of 1933, Government of India Home Department,Political Section.

14. Ibid.

On June 23, 1933, Choudhary Khushi Mohammad, a retired Revenue Minister, tried to settle the dispute between the religious leaders and between the Sheikh and the Mirwaiz.[15] Two meetings were held by Choudhary Khushi Mohammad to bring conciliation between the two leaders. But nothing came out of such meetings.[16] Efforts for the conciliation were revived by the then Home Minister, Wajahat Husain. On June 27, 1933 Wajahat Husain held a meeting in order to heal the breach between the two parties. The other personalities who attended the meeting were Choudhary Khushi Mohammad, Mohammad Din Fauq, Munshi Siraj-ud-Din and Moulavi Mohammad Yousuf Shah. The problems of both the parties were discussed but the meeting ended in failure.[17]

Dr.Iqbal's appeal to the Kashmiri Muslims to refrain from mutual strife:

In May 1933, Iqbal was telegraphically informed by some of the people to visit the Kashmir and see things for himself.[18] Iqbal himself wanted to visit the valley,

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15. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit.,Journal 26, 1933, Item 2.

16. Ibid. Item 3.

17. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit. The Aina (Weekly) Srinagar May 7, 1973, p.4.

18. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit., June 29, 1933.

but he was not allowed to do so by the Dogra Government.[19] On June 29, 1933, he made a joint appeal alongwith Syyid Mohsin Shah to refrain from mutual strifes.[20] To prevent outside intervention for the oanciliation between the parties, Mr Syyid Husain issued an order that a committee would be constituted to make peace between the parties since all this was going on the government issued notice prohibiting the Mirwaiz not to preach in Hazratbal and Ziyarat Naqashband Sahib.[21] This was resented by the followers of the Mirwaiz. The law and order situation in the State became worse. The Azad Muslim Conference also condemned the Government for its failure to maintain law and order[22] and passed a resolution requesting the Government to restore the right of preaching to the

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19. Telegram No. 107 from Resident of Kashmir to Pollindia, June 29, 1953, File 43/11 of 1933.

20. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail op.cit. June 29, 1933, Item 5.

21. Ibid., June 29,1933, item 1 also telegram No.119 from Resident of Kashmir to Pollindia, Simila, July 7, 1933, File 43/11 of 1933.

22. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit., July 7, 1933, Item 4.

Mirwaiz according to the established rules and regulations.[23] The Mirwaiz held Sheikh Abdullah responsible for creating differences between the two Mirwaizes, Moulavi Qawam-ud-Din described the followers of the Sheikh as the new thieves of religion.[24] Such statements increased the hostility between the parties.[25]

When Sheikh Abdullah was released from prison, on August 9, 1933, the Mirwaiz offered him a hand of cooperation in order to put an end to the rivalry between them. He sent Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl and Khawaja Mohammad Abdullah Basu with a letter to Sheikh Abdullah. But no good response was shown by the Sheikh with the result that the deputationists returned disappointed, and the matter ended there.[26]

No measures of conciliation brought the leaders close to each other. Each leader had his own line of action to follow. Although many attempts were made both by private and official agencies to bridge the gap between the two parties, none proved successful. Even Dr. Iqbal was very

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23. Ibid, July 26, 1933, Item 3.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.August 12, 1933, Item 2.

unhappy with the political situation prevailing in the valley. He laid stress on unity in the belief that unity was the only way through which one could achieve his favourable ends.[27] In an appeal to the Kashmiri Muslims he said " I appeal to the Muslims of Kashmir to beaware of the forces that are working against them and to unite their ranks. The time for two or three political parties in Kashmir has not yet come. The Supreme need of the moment in a single party representing all Muslims in the State. If perfect unanimity of political opinion is not secured in Kashmir, all the interests of people of the State will prove ineffective."[28]

Kashmiri Pandits and Muslim factional politics

The Kashmiri Pandits were hostile towards the mass movement led by the Muslims. They exploited factional groupism among the Muslims in order to weaken the mass movement. They thought it a communal movement, as it was led by the Muslims.[29] On finding the leaders at variance with each other, they took the side of Moulavi

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27. Latter dated,Lahore,Oct.12, 1933, from Dr.Sir Mohammad Iqbal to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah quoted in Mohammad Yousuf Saraf, Kashmiris fight for freedom (1819-1946),Vol.I (Lahore,Pakistan, Feroz Sons, 1968, p.493.

28. Prof.Masud-ul-Hasan, Life of Iqbal, Book I (Lahore,Pakistan, Feroz Sons, 1978),pp.336-337.

29. P.N.Bazaz, Kashmir-ka-Gandhi (Srinagar, Kashmir publishing Company, 1935, pp.125-126.

Yousuf Shah and made secret meetings with him and his followers, to create differences between the Sheikh and the Mirwaiz.[30] But the Sheikh asked them to give up their hostility against the movement. In one of his speeches on Feb.27, 1933 he said "During the last agitation our Hindu brethren opposed our movement". It is better for them to join us or at least refrain from opposing this movement".[31] Using personal influence he made the Pandit leaders understand the real purpose of the movement, and advised them to be neutral towards it.[32]

In one of his meetings held on May 9, 1933, he said,"The Pandits should neither come to me, nor should go to see Moulvi Yousuf Shah. Both of us are at variance with each other. The Pandits must adopt an attitude of neutrality".[33]

However, these pleas and requests proved useless, as they continued to create wider differences between

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30. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.oit, October 12, 1931, Item 1. Mirza Ghulam Mustafa, Assadullah Vakil, were among the supporters of Mirwaiz.

31. Ibid., February 2, 1933, Item 1, May 5, 1933, Item 41.

32. Ibid. May 9, 1933, Item 2.

33. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit. The Aina (Weekly) Srinagar May 15, 1973, P.5.

the two leaders.[34]

Factional politics among the Muslims, the hostile attitude of the non-Muslims, controversial elements like Ahmadiyas and Mirwais Hamadani posed a serious threat to the movement. Keeping all these things into consideration young Muslim radicals appeared on the scene to save the movement from further disintegration.[35]

Birth of Young Muslim Radicals and their contribution towards secularization of Muslim politics in Kashmir

The radical element in Muslim politics emerged due to the efforts made by the leaders of the Muslim Conference in order to save the movement from further disintegration. The radical group of Muslim believed in bringing fundamental changes both in politics and social relationship. They believed in Hindu-Muslim unity and at the same time believed in the unity of men, irrespective of caste, creed and religion.

Young Muslim radicals were influenced by the Ahrars during the latters exile in Lahore in 1934.[36]

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34. On July 24, 1935, a joint meeting of Moulavi Yousuf, and the pandits took place at Mirwaiz - Manzil, to consider the question of release of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his political workers, who were serving then their term of prison. A decision was jointly taken that the Govt. be requested not to release Sheikh,until the peace was guaranteed to the citizens of State. It becomes now clear that Kashmiri pandits were equally responsible for creating differences among the Muslims.

35. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly) Srinagar May 15, 1973. p.5.

The Majalis-a-Ahrar had resolved to intensify propaganda among the migrant Kashmiris, and to persuade various political groups in Kashmir and Jammu to sink their differences to work on the programme prepared by the Ahrars.[37] Influenced by such an approach of exiled leaders in Lahore, the Muslim radicals decided to redirect the Kashmir movement on secular lines.

During the agitation of 1934, the radicals became very popular with the masses. Their secular approach to the politics was the greatest contribution made by them to the freedom movement of Kashmir. They preached extronism, anti-imperialism, nationalism and secularism in Kashmir.[38] Their approach to politics was based on their opposition against exploiters and oppressors. They did not believe in discrimination between man and man on the basis of religion, caste and creed. The movement launched by them was not against "any particular individual or a community". It was a movement for the emancipation of all the oppressed.[39] The secular character of the movement was explained thus:

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36. Demi-official letter from H.G.Garbett to Havlett Secretary to Govt.of India, Home Department, New Delhi (confidential). File No.43/111/34, Political Home Department, (National Archives of India). They were exiled to Lahore for their agitational activities.
37. Letter from Garbett to Hawlett No.C.1427-S-B (Confidential), Ibid.
38. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit. The Aina (Weekly) Srinagar, May 17, 1973, p.5.
39. Ibid. The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, August, 1973, p.5.

> This movement is not and can never be against non-Muslims. The slogans such as Nahra-i-Takbir or Nahra-i-Hyderi should not be taken to mean that we are thinking on communal lines of God forbid, that we have to destroy out Hindu brethren. What we want is to snatch our rights from the oppressors. This is the resultant.Those who believe in it should join our movement, and co-operate with us.[40]

The secular nationalistic and revolutionary rule, played by the young radicals made the non-Muslim community understand that the movement could be jointly started by both the communities. But they were not ready to join the movement, so long as the Muslim Conference did not change into a National body, so that the doors would be thrown open to non-Muslims as well.

Sardar Budh Singh was the first non-Muslim, who was in favour of a national body and common platform for both the communities. He believed that the people of the country should be united so that they would become a prosperous nation.[41] Commenting on this issue he said "Let me venture to repeat that it is impossible to achieve success in securing political freedom and economic advancement to all sections of the people unless and until

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40. Speech,delivered by Abdul Razak on February 26, 1934 at Khanqah-i-Mullaha,

41. Sardar Budh Singh,"Riyasat mein Assembly" The Ranbi (Weekly,Jammu, June 20,1932,P.10.

some special national body is established for performing this task. There is no hope of any unity and cooperation between Muslims and non-Muslims unless and until the Muslim Conference is changed into a national body. The more the delay is caused in this work, the farther shall we remain from our destination".[42]

The Muslim Conference was aware that the need was being felt for a national body. But this was not an easy task. The leaders of the Muslim Conference were facing many problems. On the one hand, they had to educate common masses for this change, and on the other hand, they had to free the Muslim Conference from the controversial elements like Ahmadiyas and Mirwaiz Hamadani, so that the change could be brought about without any hindrance and the Muslim Conference would be thrown open to non-Muslims as well. The task was done by radical forces of the Muslim Conference.

Exit of the Ahmadiyas and Mirwaiz Hamadani from the Muslim Conference

In the initial stage, the Ahmadiyas had played a vital role in the organization of the movement. But they became controversial due to certain reasons. First, they were thought revolutionary to the state by the non-Muslims. Moulavi Yousuf Shah held them responsible for discrediting

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42. Ibid., "Quami-Itihad-ke-Silalah Mein Kasur-Kasur-kis-ka Hai? The Ranbir (Weekly), Jammu, June 20, 1932, p.10.

his profession. Some workers of the Conference complained[1] of their over dominant role in the organisation, their pressence in the organization made no proper distribution of work. They were held responsible for propagating their faith, and at the same time, they were also held responsible for factional politics in the State and their presence was thought detrimental to the movement. It was owing to these reasons that by 1936, the Ahmidiyas were completely expelled from the Muslim Conference.[43]

The exit of Mirwaiz Hamadani also took place because of his differences with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. The Mirwaiz, who was initially the supporter of the Sheikh, began to differ with him in 1936. Mirwaiz Hamadani was not happy with the position of Muslim radicals in the party, nor was he in favour of a change which was likely to take place, on secular grounds. Opposition between the two leaders was so strong that in a reference to the Mirwaiz, Sheikh Abdullah said, "Those who want to fight us, should come in the open field. Our guns will tear them into pieces'. By the guns he meant the people. The fear of people's wrath made him the organization in 1937. It was after the expulsion of Ahmadiyas and Mirwaiz Hamadani

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43. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit., October,9, 1932, Item 2,August,19,1932, item 6; Pir Mohammad Makhdoomi, op.cit. The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, October 31, 1972, p.4.File No.42/111/34,Political and Home Department, (National Archives of India).

from the Muslim Conference that it began to move towards the secularization of politics.[44]

Unity meetings and secularization

During the period of freedom movement, communal strifes at religious places between Hindus and Muslim took place and created a gap between them.[45] This gap was further widened by the political agitation.[46] But secularism and traditional brotherhood, for which the state was known, was not totally absent. The leaders of both the communities, forgetting their political differences, stood to restore cordial relations between the two communities. Even rival elements among the Muslims stood for Hindu Muslim Unity. Such efforts did, in a large manner, bring both the communities together for joint political action. The leaders of different communities stood for bringing about cordial relations between Hindus and Muslims.

Sardar Budh Singh was the first non-Muslim who stood for Hindu Muslim unity. In July 1932, he attended the meetings conducted by the Muslims and delivered speeches in favour of Hindu-Muslim unity, highlighting the benefits of such unity for both the communities.[47]

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44. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, August 23, 1974, p.4.

45. The Ranbir (Weekly), Jammu, June 16, 1932.

46. Ibid.

47. The Ranbir (Weekly), Jammu, August 1, 1932, p.4.

In September 1932, when communal strifes between the two communities took place, the Sikh Gobind Sabha Srinagar played a remarkable role in bringing both the communities together. The Sabha held meetings for the purpose. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah, Kashyapbandhu, Pandit Jia Lal Kilam and others participated in these meetings and delivered speeches in favour of Hindu-Muslim unity and urged upon the people to live in peace. These meetings contributed a lot in bringing both the communities together.[48]

On October 2, 1932, at the annual function of the Khanqah Middle School, leaders of both the communities were invited. They delivered speeches in favour of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood. The Hindu leaders who participated in the function were Pandit Kashypbandhu, Tara Chand Trisal and Jia Lal Kilam.[49] Moulavi Abdullah Vakil on the occasion declared that the peace between the two communities was possible only when they respected the rights of each other.[50]

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48. The Ranbir (Weekly), Jammu, October 10, 1932, also Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit. The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, October 3, 1932, p.4.

49. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, October 3, 1972, p.6.

50. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, opcit., October 2, 1932, Item 2.

At the inaugural function of Political and Social Conference of the Kashmiri Pandits held on October 2, 1932 at Sheetalnag, many of Muslim leaders were invited. Sheikh Abdullah repeated his faith in Hindu-Muslim unity. Slogans for unity were raised at the meeting.[51] This happy development influenced some non-Muslims in Jammu Province, like Choudhary Giyan Mirpuri, who supported the cause of unity. He also appealed to the leaders of other communities to divert their energies to the cause and achievement of Hindu Muslim unity.[52]

On October 3, 1932, the Pandits of Rainawari arranged a tea party for the Muslims for the same purpose. Members of both communities participated. They included, among others, Mirza Ghulam Mustafa, Assadullah Munshi, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Pandit Kashyapbandhu and Jia Lal Kilam. They emphasized the need for unity. Similarly, the Pandits of Dabaq Mohalla arranged a dinner for the Muslims.[53]

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51. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit. October 29, 1932, Item 2.

52. The Ranbir (Weekly) Jammu, Mar.6, 1990 (Samvaj), p.9.

53. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit., October 3, 1932, Item 2.

Muslims also collected money by contribution and gave it to Pandits for the repair of their temples.[54] Even disputes over religious places like Nagbal (Anantnag) and Chattabal (Srinagar) were handled with mutual understanding.[55]

These efforts for Hindu Muslim unity improved relations between the two parties. The meetings provided a basis on which a joint political endeavour could be made possible in future. Most of the leaders who participated in these unity meetings were those who later conducted the movement on nationalistic lines. Therefore, these meetings made a healthy contribution towards the secularisation of politics in the state.

By 1935, the demand for responsible Government became the main goal of the movement. The Muslim Conference remained the focal point of the movement and became the chief sponsor for change.

Muslim Conference and secularization

The Muslim Conference leadership was now feeling the need to run the politics on secular and nationalistic lines. The first step in this direction

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54. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly) Srinagar, October 3, 1972, p.4.

55. The Ranbir (Weekly) Jammu, January 16, 1933, p.13.

was taken in March 1933, when the idea of joint action in politics was born.[56] In November 1934, Sheikh Abdullah went on a tour to Punjab. For four months he stayed outside the state and exchanged his ideas and views with the nationalist leaders of the Indian National Congress.[57] He was influenced by the ideas of the Congress leaders and the result was the incorporation of nationalism into Kashmir politics.[58] In order to gain public opinion in his favour, he started "The Hamdard with P.N.Bazaz as the editor. The paper gained popularity in a very short time. It preached secularism and laid the foundation of progressive nationalism in Kashmir. The paper developed democratic consciousness among the general masses, irrespective of religion, caste and creed. It fought against orthodoxy. It also made the people understand the need for responsible government on secular lines.[59]

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56. P.N.Bazaz, The History of Struggle for Freedom, in Kashmir, P.165.

57. P.N.Bazaz, Kashmir ka Gandhi, (Srinagar Kashmir Publishing Company, 1935), pp.140-141.

58. The Ranbir (Weekly) Jammu, August 12, 1935, p.8.

59. "Letter dated Srinagar May 27, 1938, from P.N. Bazaz to M.N.Roy" M.N.Roy Papers (New Delhi, Nehru Memorial Library Teen Murti House).

From 1936, the Muslim Conference very confidentially advocated nationalism and secularism. On May 8, 1936, when a responsible Government day was observed in the whole valley, and a call for joining the celebrations was also given to non-Muslims, it was not responded to by them on the ground that they still doubted the character of the movement led by the Muslim Conference'. The daily Martand also expressed misgivings and termed it an organization of communalists brought into existence for the protection of Muslim rights.[60] The Rajput Gazette also expressed the same views.[61] But a small section of intellectually advanced non-Muslims responded to the appeal. Their participation, was a great contribution to the growth and development of national politics at this stage. The Muslim Conference also felt the need of non-Muslim participation very urgently. The growing awareness of this need made it necessary that Muslim Conference be transformed into a national body, and the movement must be brought to the level of the Indian National Congress, both idealogically

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60. Editorial. The Ranbir (Weekly) Jammu, May 11, 1936, p.5.

61. Ibid.

and politically. The task of secularization of politics became henceforth the main job of Sheikh Abdullah and the leftist forces of the Muslim Conference. Sheikh Abdullah at the sixth Annual Session of Muslim Conference held at Jammu declared[62] that all the people, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs had suffered at the hands of irresponsible government. They were ignorant and had to pay taxes and were in debt and starvation. To overcome all these ills they had to join together and achieve responsible government for all the people irrespective of religion, caste and creed. By 1936, the leadership of Muslim Conference preached openly the politics of nationalism and thus cleared the fear of communalism from the minds of non-Muslims. As a result, the progressive minded non-Muslims actively participated in the movement, and their participation gave birth to the progressive forces in Kashmir politics.[63]

Emergence of New Progressive Forces and Secularization

The year 1936 saw the emergence of progressive forces in the state politics, which was a healthy development in the growth of secularism. These progressive

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62. Presidential Address delivered by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah at the sixth Annual session of All Jammu & Kashmir Muslim Conference on 25th, 26th and 27th March, 1938 at Jammu (Jammu Prem Printing Press), p.7.

63. Ibid.

forces, orginated from the leftist forces of both the communities, Muslims and Non-Muslims, because of their dis-satisfaction and disappointment with the politics of their respective communities. The Muslim radicals and non-Muslims progressive were convinced that the politics of their respective communities was middle class politics and factious in character. They believed that this type of politics would hinder the movement in the state. They felt that the need of the time was, therefore, to change the direction of the movement from middle class nationalistic politics to a socialistic one. In other words, the movement had to be brought in line with the progressive socialist movements of British Indian states. The increasing effect of these progressive movements had created socialistic tendencies and new organisational patterns resulting in the formation of the Youth League, the Labour Movement, the Students Federation, the Indian National Congress, the Peasants' Association and the Hindu Progressive Party. The most effective of all the organisations was the Kashmir Youth League, the Student Federation, the Mazdoor Sabha and the Kisan Sabha.[64]

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64. P.N.K.Bamzai, A History of Kashmir, New Delhi, Metropolitan Book Company (Pvt.) Ltd., p.709.

Kashmir Youth League and Secularization

The emergence of the Youth League in Kashmir in 1936 was a significant event. The League was actually the direct offshoot of radicalization of Kashmir politics. The League emerged under the influence of radical Muslim elements and progressive Hindu elements. These two elements knew that the association of young elements with politics would make the movement more effective. They believed that the formation of young elements, belonging to different communities and thoughts, and dedicated to the country's cause[65] would lead the movement speedily to a successful conclusion. It was due to these reasons that the League was organised by P.N.Bazaz who had received the consent of Muslim radicals for this purpose. It organised young elements, irrespective of religion, caste and creed for the service of the country.[66]

Within a short period of time the League was supported by all communities of people.[67] The first meetings of the League started with new slogans like 'Long Live the Youth League' "Long Live Young Men' and 'Long Live Our Motherland'. The leaders of both the communities addressed the meetings and stressed Hindu -Muslim unity. Communalism

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65. The Hamdard (Weekly), Srinagar, July 4, 1936, p.15.

66. Ibid.

67. The Hamdard (Weekly) Srinagar, August 8, 1936, p.11.

was decried and thought harmful for the social growth. Addressing one of the meetings of the League the Sheikh said,[68] Thank God, we are gradually coming out of the mire of communalism and treading the right path. Muslims should associate themselves with youth movement".[69] An organized youth movement began to emerge The Youth League played a momentous role in forging secular politics. It organised public meetings and processions and imparted nationalistically oriented political education to the masses.[70] The Youth League not only took a leading part in influencing the people with nationalist outlook, but also paved the way for the appearance of socialistically oriented cadres in Kashmir national freedom.[71]

Labour Movement

The Labour Movement was started in 1865, with the shawl bauf revolt, which was again repeated in 1924 by the Silk factory workers.[72] Both these movements were crushed due to non-organisational character of the

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68. The Hamdard (Weekly), Srinagar, August 29, 1936, p.9.

69. Ibid.

70. The Hamdard (Weekly) Srinagar, April 13, 1937, p.11.

71. The Tribune, Lahore November 12, 1936, p.10.

72. Ibid.

movement. They could not evolve as organised movements due to the Governmental ban on the formation of associations. Their leaders failed to make them realise their potential strength, till 1937.[73]

The Mazdoor Sabha came into being in the middle of 1937, by the efforts of youngmen who believed in socialism. They had formed some sort of associations like "Free Thinkers Association" and "Study Circles" where they discussed socialism and its application to Kashmir. They were also in contact with Indian socialists like Comrade Bedi, Mrs. Freda Bedi, Dr.K.M.Ashraf and others.[74] They held discussions with them and gave the young men the idea of organising the Mazdoor Sabha. Once the idea was born such associations like the 'Kashmir Motor Drivers Association, the Carpet Weavers Association, the Tonga Drivers Association, began to be organised. All these associations were brought under one association which came to be known as the Mazdoor Sabha. Its membership was open to all without any distinction of religion, caste and creed. The Sabha was above communalism.[75]

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73. Labourers were not organised till 1937.

74. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, June 15, 1975, p.4.

75. The Hamdard (Weekly), Srinagar, October 23, 1973, p.15.

The Mazdoor Sabha played an important role in the politics of Kashmir. The Labourers performed their task very conscienciously which was assigned to them from time to time. They were educated by young cadres in the art of organisation and conduct of the movement in a disciplined manner. By this education, they became more and more conscious of their power and operated more effectively in the conduct of secular politics in the State.

A regular feature of the Sabha was holding of meetings and taking out demonstrations with red flags and banners in their hands. They shouted slogans of secular nature. This reflected the character of the new movement, and its contribution towards the secularization of politics in the State.[76] It made a creditable contribution to the freedom movement and made the people realise that a successful movement could be conducted only on secular lines. It for the first time separated religion from politics and taught people how to fight in an organised way for the fullfilment of their demands.

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76. Editorial, The Ranbir (Weekly) Jammu 15, 1937, P.7.

Peasant Movement

The middle class leadership of the Muslim Conference failed to organise the peasants and to assign them a precise role they could have played in the freedom movement. But the youngmen radicals did not ignore them. They started organizing the peasantry towards the close of 1937.

Kisan Sabha

This organization came into being in October 1937. The secular role played by the Mazdoor Sabhas made the leaders realise that the Kisan Sabha, should also be organised so that it could also contribute to the secularization of Muslim politics in the state.[77] The aim of the Kisan Sabha was to get the peasants united so that they would fight unitedly for the demands which were ignored by the middle class leadership of the Muslim Conference. By uniting and organising them into a separate body, irrespective of religion, caste and creed, the Kashmir movement was definitely taking on the colour of nationalism and secularism.[78]

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77. The Hamdard (Weekly) Srinagar, October 2, 1937,P.2. on September 29, 1937 at a meeting organised by Mazdoor Sabha Sheikh Abdullah said,"his energies would now be directed towards the villages."

78. The first meeting of Kisan Sabha was convened at Hyderpora on 28th and 29th of October and was presided over by Sufi Mohammad Akbar. The Ranbir (Weekly),Jammu, November 1, 1937,p.3.

These movements infused a new dynamic spirit among the masses, bringing about a change which made them realise that in political action they should be united, irrespective of religion and other things, for the fullfilment of their demands. Apart from the role played by these organisations for secularisation, there were other developments also which made their contribution in this direction.

Mr.Jinnah's Private visit to Kashmir and his support for Hindu-Muslim unity

In May 1936, Mr. Jinnah paid a visit to the Valley in his private capacity and delivered speeches in support of Hindu-Muslim unity. He was himself a great lover of Hindu Muslim unity and had worked for it for years together. During the course of his speeches, he said "Since I am not aware of this place, one thing which I feel necessary to tell you is that the Hindus of this state, should always be given an assurance that equality and justice shall be secured to them in the state. It is the duty of the majority to give this assurance to the minorities.... without winning the confidence of the minorities and without assuring them of the equal treatment with the majority, the obstacles in your political party will not be removed."[79]

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79. The Khalid, Srinagar, July 3, 1939, p.3.

The devotees of Hindu-Muslim unity took the support of Mr. Jinnah's view in their justification for secularism. Commenting on Mr. Jinnah's view, Mr.Choudhary Ghulam Abbas said,"The sun and substance of Mr. Jinnah's historically important speech.... was that the majority must win the confidence and cooperation of the minorities without which it is not possible for the former to succeed in its aim. We therefore necessarily come to this conclusion that Mr. Jinnah had already contemplated the policy of nationalism and the change in the form of the Muslim Conference.[80]

Indian National Congress and Kashmir Politics

It was in 1936-37 that many congress leaders like Purushottam Das Tandon, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and K.M.Ashraf came to Kashmir, with a view to create a line of communication between the leaders and different communities in Kashmir and the Indian National Congress. For this purpose many talks were held and K.M. Ashraf delivered speeches in favour of Hindu-Muslim unity and joint action by them. Mr. Tandon was strictly instructed by Pt.Nehru to see Sheikh Abdullah and Prem Nath Bazaz.[81] The communication between the two parties,resulted in the Nehru - Abdullah Peshawar meet, which was an important event in the growth of secular politics in Kashmir. In

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80. The Khalid, Srinagar, June 10, 1939, p.3.

81. The Hamdard (Weekly),Srinagar,August 15, 1936, p.6.
The Ranbir (Weekly),Jammu,October 18, 1937, P.7.

January 1938, Sheikh Abdullah went to Peshawar on an invitation of Nehru, who was already there, on his official tour.[82] He held discussions with Nehru on the changing character of the Kashmir politics. Pt Nehru categorically suggested that the doors of the Muslim Conference should be thrown open to non-Muslims and a new era should be started in the Kashmir politics,[83] The Sheikh was impressed by Nehru's view on Kashmir movement. Soon after his return, he explained to his partymen that there was no alternative to reorganizing the Kashmir movement on national lines and to changing the Muslim Conference into the National Organisation.[84]

The Indian National Congress and the All States Peoples Conference made a tremendous impact on the Kashmir politics during the second half of the 20th century. The main reason for this was the change in the policy of the Indian National Congress towards native states, which was basically effected by the birth of the All India States Peoples Conference in 1927.[85] The Congress, however,

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82. The Ranbir,(Weekly),Jammu,February 31,1938,P.7.

83. The Ranbir,(Weekly), Jammu,February 14,1938,P.16.

84. Ibid.

85. Dr.P.B.Gajandragadkar, Kashmir Retrospect and Prospect, (Bombay University, 1967),P.21.

changed its policy towards the states, when in 1928 at its session at Calcutta, it deleted its policy of non-interference from its programme and urged upon the princes to grant fundamental rights and responsible Government to their subjects. The people of the states were also given an assurance that the Congress would support them in their struggle for the attainment of their legitimate objectives. At the fifth session of the All States Peoples Conference held at Karachi in 1936, Pandit Nehru declared that the Congress movement for freedom included the freedom of peoples of the states also. The Karachi Session of the Conference was significant in that the Congress and States peoples came closer to each other.[86] The close affinity between the Congress and the All India States Peoples Conference was further exhibited as the Navarasi Convention of 1938.

At the Navarasi Session of 1938, the States Peoples Conference opposed the resolution of the Congress Working Committee, which had banned the formation of Congress unite in the states. P.N. Bazaz from Kashmir also opposed the resolution and asked for its amendment.[87] The resolution was accordingly amended at the Congress Session held at Haripora in Feb. 1938. The resolution

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86. So many organisational units were set up by the All India States Peoples Conference, K.L.Handa, History of Freedom Struggle-Princely States, (New Delhi,Central News Agency, 1908), P.99.

87. Ibid.p.192.

stood for the same political, social and economic freedom in their states, as in the rest of India.[88]

The Haripora resolution encouraged and inspired the people of the states to organise themselves and conduct their struggle for freedom. At the same time, it created confidence among the States People Congress. The Congress policy was now clear, aiming at active participation of people's struggle for freedom in the states. The impact of this policy on the freedom movement of Kashmir was felt in quick succession, which quickened the transition of the movement from its communal to national character.[89]

Resolution concerning the change in the name of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference

It was on January 4th and 5th, 1938 that the working committee of the Muslim Conference met at Jammu to change the name of the Conference, so that its doors could be thrown open to all, irrespective of religion, caste and creed. Moulana Mohammad Syeed Masoodi was the mover of the resolution in support of the change in the name. He proposed that "The name of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference be changed into the All Jammu and Kashmir Political Conference.[90] He wanted to delete the name

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88. Ibid, pp.112-113.

89. Pir Mohammad Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, June 23, 1975, P.5.

90. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, July 15, 1975, p.4.

"Muslim". The main purpose of this change, according to him, was to smoothen the way for the establishment of an organisation which provided to both Hindus and Muslims a common platform.[91] This resolution was supported by Raja Mohammad Akbar Khan on the plea that in politics we are concerned with India as a whole and our outlook should be above caste and creed consideration.[92] The resolution was thoroughly discussed by the working committee. But it was passed, as it was against the constitutional provisions of the Muslim Conference to pass such a resolution, except in an annual session of the conference, with a two-thirds majority present and voting in the session, the legal point of the Muslim Conference hindered the working committee from moving ahead. So the resolution was postponed till the next session of the Muslim Conference, which was going to be held on 25th of March, 1938.[93]

At the sixth annual session, the resolution was again moved, but it was again postponed due to the opposition of a few members. Among them may be mentioned Abdul Majid Quraishi and Abdullah Siyakhvi, who did not want to throw the doors of the Muslim Conference open

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91. Ibid.

92. The Ranbir,(Weekly), Jammu April 13, 1938,P.18.

93. The Basic constition of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, published by the General Secretary of the Conference, Article 46.

to non-Muslims, because they thought that the Muslims were less educated and less conscious in comparison to non-Muslims.[94] Allah Rakha and Mohammad Amin, who were representing the Muslims of Jammu proposed that resolution be published for public opinion and a discussion made in the forthcoming session of the conference. The disagreement between the mover and the opponents created a tense atmosphere. Sheikh Abdullah had to intervene, suggesting that the resolution be placed before public for voting.[96] But the public opinion was never sought. The controversy was finally settled down, with the intervention of Pt.Nehru through correspondence, suggesting the new organisation be named as the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference.[97]

The Resolution of Secularisation Passed by the Working Committee

Until April 15, 1938, the resolution of secularization was not taken up by the Muslim Conference, because the Assembly elections were going to be held on 15th April, 1938. Once the elections were over and the Muslim Conference got the majority,[98] it busied itself with the task of making the people understand the true

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94. The Ranbir(Weekly),Jammu April 13, 1938, P.18. Pir Mohammad Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, July 15, 1975, p.4.

96. The Ranbir (Weekly),Jammu, March, 28, 1938, p.12.

significance of nationalism. Sheikh Abdullah delivered speeches on secular politics and stressed the need of secularing Muslim politics.[99] The public response to his call and the success of the Muslim Conference in the elections, was a sufficient guarantee to Sheikh Abdullah to move ahead, with his programme of changing the Muslim Conference into a national body. It was under such favourable circumstances that Sheikh Abdullah, on June 28, 1938, placed the resolution of secularisation before the working committee. The resolution was passed by a majority of 14 against 4 votes.[100] changing the name of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference.

It may not be out of place here to mention that the Ludhiana Session of February 15, 1939 of the All States Peoples Conference had a special significance for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, as it brought the Kashmir freedom movement in line with the Indian nationalism. Fortyseven delegates from Kashmir attended the Ludhiana Session of the conference. After their return from the conference, the leaders organised public meetings and processions, acquainting the masses with the programme of the All States Peoples Conference. A common platform

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97. Choudhary Ghulam Abbas, Kash-Maksh (in Autobiography) Lahore Sind, Sagar Academy, 1966, P.211- 21.

98. Muslim Conference won nineteen seats, out of the total elected strength of twentyone seats.

99. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit. The Aina , (Weekly), Srinagar, August 13, 1975, p.4.

was established where both the Hindu and Muslim leaders addressed public meetings. A new cadre of nationalists was born. The Kashmir Freedom Movement identified itself with the freedom movements of the native states.[101]

On March 6, 1939, the Sheikh went on a month's tour outside the state. During his tour, he took the opportunity of exchanging views with top Congress leaders like Mahatama Ghandi and Pt. Nehru, about his party and the political movement in Kashmir. On March 14, 1939, he was honoured with the offer to preside over the Tripura Session of the All India States Peoples Conference. The Conference was addressed by top Congress leaders like J.L. Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patal, Bholabhai Desai and Kamla Devi Chattopadiyaya.[102] In his presidential address he assured the Congress leaders that the people

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100. P.N.Bazaz, The History of Freedom Struggle in Kashmir, op.cit., p.163, The Hamdard (Weekly), Srinagar, July 3, 1938, p.18.

The Four members who opposed the resolution were Ghulam Abbas, Abdul Majid Quraishi, Choudhary Abdullah Blaali and Abdul Aziz. They opposed on the ground of muslim were educationally backward.

101. Hafiz Mohammad Ismail, op.cit., March 5, 1939. Item 1.

102. Ibid, March 17, 1939, Item 3.

of Kashmir would end the communal politics and reactionarianism, and that they "will take rest only after having owned the ideal and basic principles of the Indian National Congress."[103]

Sheikh Abdullah after having accepted and adopted the nationalism and secularism of Indian national Congress as the basis of his own and his party's programme, opposed the Muslim leaders role towards the states and became a vehement critic of the Muslim League. He opposed everything that came in his way of **secularisation.**[104]

By 1939, he had forcefully preached the politics of nationalism and opposed the official policy of the Muslim League, declaring it as inapplicable to the problems of the Indian states. Like other Congress leaders, he had become a vehement critic of the Muslim League, and advised the League to leave Kashmir alone.[105]

For his pro-Congress attitude, he was opposed by Mr. M.A.Jinnah, Ahmadiyas and especially by group of students, who distributed posters of the masses against the turn coat attitude of the Muslim Conference leaders.[106] This situation created a feeling among the leaders of the

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103. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, December 7, 1975, p.2.

104. The Tribune, (Lahore), April 15, 1939, p.17.

105. Ibid.

106. Pir Mohammad Afzal Makhdoomi, op.cit., The Aina (Weekly), Srinagar, December 7, 1975, P.2, December 21, 1975, p.2.

Muslim Conference that these forces might not dissuade the members of the General Council from confirming the resolution, which had already been passed by the working Committee of the Muslim Conference. Keeping all this in view, the meeting of the General Council was immediately called to approve the resolution.

General Council Approves the Resolution

On April 25, 1939, the General Council of the Muslim Conference held its meeting at Mujahid Manzil to consider the situation. But it was adjourned to the next day, due to some problem created by S.P. College students, who did not want the resolution to be passed. On April 26th, 1939, the General Council approved the resolution and recommended amendment in the name and constitution of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, in order to enable all progressive elements in the State to join the organisation, for the achievement of responsible government in the state. The General Council also decided "to hold a special session of the conference under the presidentship of Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, ex-member of the State Assembly, on 10th and 11th of June to get the resolution approved by the representative gathering".[107]

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107. The Tribune (Lahore), April 28, 1938, P.1.

In pursuance of the decision by the General Council on 26th and 27th of April, the special session of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was held at Mujahid Manzil on 10th and 11th June, 1939.

The session was attended by one hundred and seventy eight delegates, out of two hundred constituting the total strength of the general council. Some non-Muslims also participated to witness the proceedings. The session was presided over by Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq.[108] The following resolution was moved by Moulana Sayeed Masoodi:

> "This special session of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, convened it connection with the changes in the name and constitution of this conference approves as confirmed and ratified by the General Council in its meeting held on 27th April and resolution No.5 passed by working committee of the Muslim Conference in its meeting held on June 28, 1938 and resolves that in future the name of the conference will be the All Jammu & Kashmir National Conference. The session also resolves that every adult person could become its member, irrespective of religion, caste and colour."[109]

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108. The Hindustan Times, June 22, 1939, P.4.

109. The Khalid, Srinagar, June 21, 1939, P.2.

The resolution of secularisation was supported by Mohammad Syeed Masoodi,[110] Choudhary Ghulam Abbas,[111] Mirza Mohammad Beg[112] and Allah Rakha Sagar.[113] But at the same time it was also opposed by members like Hamidullah, on the ground that Hindu-Muslim unity was impossible because the Hindus were much more advanced in education than the Muslims.[114] Moulavi Rafi-ud-Din and Ghulam Haider Khan, the editor of "Navjawan", also opposed the resolution.[115]

Finally, the resolution was put to the vote, one hundred and seventyfive out of one hundred and seventyeight, who were present in the General Council, voted in favour of the resolution and only three against it, converting the Muslim Conference into the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. As such the process of secularisation was completed.

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110. Ibid.

111. Ibid.

112. Ibid.

113. Al-Islah (Weekly) Srinagar-June, 1939.

114. The Khalid, Srinagar, June 21, 1939, P.3.

115. Al-Islah (Weekly), Srinagar, op.cit.

CHAPTER - IX

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Kashmiri Muslim community is one of the oldest communities in the Indian sub-continent. They constitute 93% of the total population, yet they remained backward due to the oppression under the Mughals, Afghans, Sikhs and Dogras. Almost all sections of the community were taxed. They were forced to do everything that the authorities wanted them to do for them. They were forced to undergo Begar and even an ordinary official of the Dogra Government could command them to do any work for them. This was not the case with Kashmiri Pandits. This state of affairs lasted till the beginning of the present century.

The transition from medieval to modern period took place when the Jhelum valley Cart Road in 1890 connected Srinagar with the rest of India. It saw the breakdown of the isolation. It was on account of its contact with outside world that great social and cultural changes began to take place.

It is a known fact that the opening of the Jhelum Valley Road broke the isolation of the valley with outside India. Christian missionaries began to pour into the

valley. Their activities created a sharp reaction. Their aim was, no doubt, to reform the Kashmiri society and to eradicate social evils from the society, but at the same time, they wanted to convert the people of the valley to Christanity. The first person to awake to this reality was Moulavi Rasool Shah Sahib, who launched a Muslim Educational Movement to provide the people English and religious education as well. He had very limited means at his disposal, but he was not found wanting in terms of determination.

The credit for creating the socio-religious reform movement among the Muslims goes to the same personality, who exposed the Muslims to modern education under the banner of Anjuman-i-ul-Islam, an organisation founded by him, for social and educational upliftment of his community. He was the precursor of Muslim modernisation in the valley, who aroused them from their deep slumber and taught them to march with the times. He dedicated his entire life to the cause of Muslim education, reformation and regeneration.

It would not be out of place here to mention that the social set-up in the valley did not all of a sudden

undergo a drastic change. Kashmir retained its old customs, rites, rituals and superstitions, in spite of ideas of modernisation and western education. Only a few sections of Kashmiri population imbibed the western influence, during the Dogra period. By and large, Kashmiris continued to follow the age-old customs and traditions come down to them from preceding ages.

Kashmir was a land of Buddhism and Brahmanism, before Islam was introduced into the valley. Even after they embraced the new faith, the people clung to them old beliefs and superstitions. They did not leave idol-worship, although they adopted it in a different way. They started to worship the shrines, saints and their relics, which were only to be revered and not be worshipped. This gave rise to polytheism and infidelity. While following these irreligious practices, Muslims drifted from the right spirit of Islam and became superstitious, which impaired their rational thinking and they became incapable of recognising and investigating the truth govering the Islamic faith. They became stagnant and through their irrationality gave an opportunity to the priests to exploit them in whatever way they liked to do so.

This gave a great blow to the basic principles of Islam and converted its simplicity and faith in one

God to extravagance and belief to saints and pirs.

Thus Islam had lost its purity and simplicity. To bring Islam back to its pristine purity, the Ahl-i-Hadith Movement was launched so that irreligious practices could be waived off from the Muslim society. Although it made mighty efforts to reform the Muslim society, it did not achieve much success. Still the movement succeeded in attacking the social evils which were prevalent in the society. And at the same time, it taught people to be rational rather than superstitious.

The revolt by the Kashmiri shawl weavers in 1865 was new development, as it was the first of its kind organised by the Kashmiris. The people had begun to feel the severity of the oppression done by the Dogra Maharaja. Some new developments in the direction of modernisation were again seem when the silk factory revolt took place in 1924.

It is worthy to note that Kashmiri literature also felt the impact of modernisation in the beginning of the twentieth century with a new order emerging in Kashmiri literature. The Persian themes which had previously dominated the literacy scene were relegated to the background and within a few years, Kashmiri poetry

and prose became a powerful and supple instrument of expression. This new development marked the end of stereotyped ways of thinking and the beginning of modernisation of Kashmiri mind and literature.

Lastly, it must be stressed that almost every aspect of Kashmiri Muslim life was responding to the forces of modernisation, whether social, political or educational. But the real credit of bringing about an awakening to the Muslims in every field of life goes to Moulavi Rasool Shah, who taught them to march with the times, and change themselves with the changing circumstances. It was he, who awoke them from their deep slumber in which they had fallen for centuries. He could rightly be called the father of Muslim Renaissance in Kashmir.